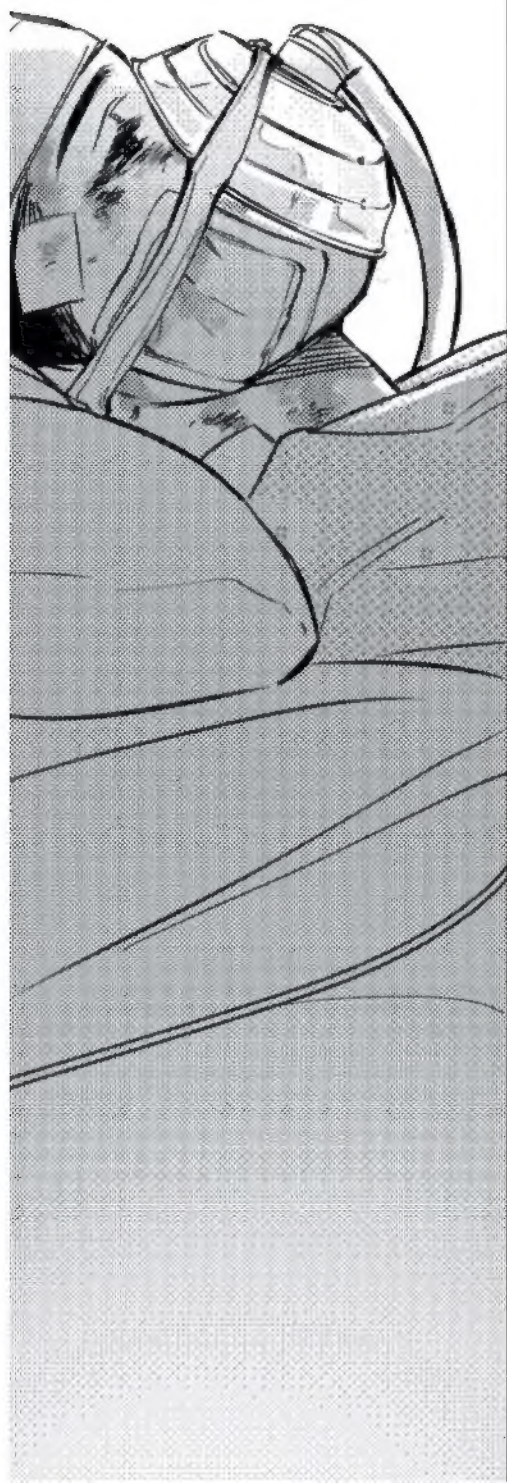


THEY SAY YOUR LIFE
FLASHES BEFORE YOUR EYES
RIGHT BEFORE YOU DIE
SO YOU CAN MAKE PEACE WITH
YOUR ENTIRE LIFE IN THOSE
FEW, BRIEF SECONDS.

DOES THAT MEAN MOM AND DAD
ALSO REFLECTED BACK ON THEIR LIVES?
IS THAT WHY THEY COULD LEAVE
WITHOUT ANY REGRETS?

COULDN'T THEY SEE ME
AS THE ONE THING THAT WOULD
HOLD THEM BACK?

AFTER THE SURGERY,
I BARELY OPENED
MY EYES AFTER
A LONG SLUMBER.



WHEN I WOKE UP,
I FOUND ONLY MY
CRYING AUNT AND THE
HOSPITAL STAFF.

AN OMINOUS ANXIETY
CREPT UP INSIDE ME AS
I TOOK NOTE OF THE
IMMEDIATE ABSENCE
OF MY PARENTS.

AUNTIE...
WHERE'S MOM
AND DAD?

SEON-
GYEONG!
ARE YOU
AWAKE,
SWEETIE?

HOW
ARE YOU
FEELING?



WHERE ARE
THEY...?

AFTER A LONG,
HESITANT PAUSE...

MY AUNT
FORCED THE TRUTH
OUT OF HERSELF.

CHSSSS

SUDDENLY,
I NOTICED
THE LOUD RASP
OF THE OXYGEN
MASK RINGING
BY MY EARS.

CHSSSS

I WASN'T READY TO ACCEPT THE TRUTH.
TO ACCEPT THE FACT THAT MY LIFE WAS
NEVER GOING TO BE SAME AGAIN,
AND THAT MY LOVING FAMILY WAS
SUDDENLY NO MORE.

I HAD TO FORGET.

I DIDN'T KNOW
WHAT TO DO.

IF REMEMBERING
THEM WAS THIS PAINFUL,
MAYBE FORGETTING WOULD
EASE THE AGONY.





I PRAYED TO GOD EACH NIGHT
THAT I WOULDN'T WAKE UP
THE NEXT DAY.



PLEASE KILL ME...

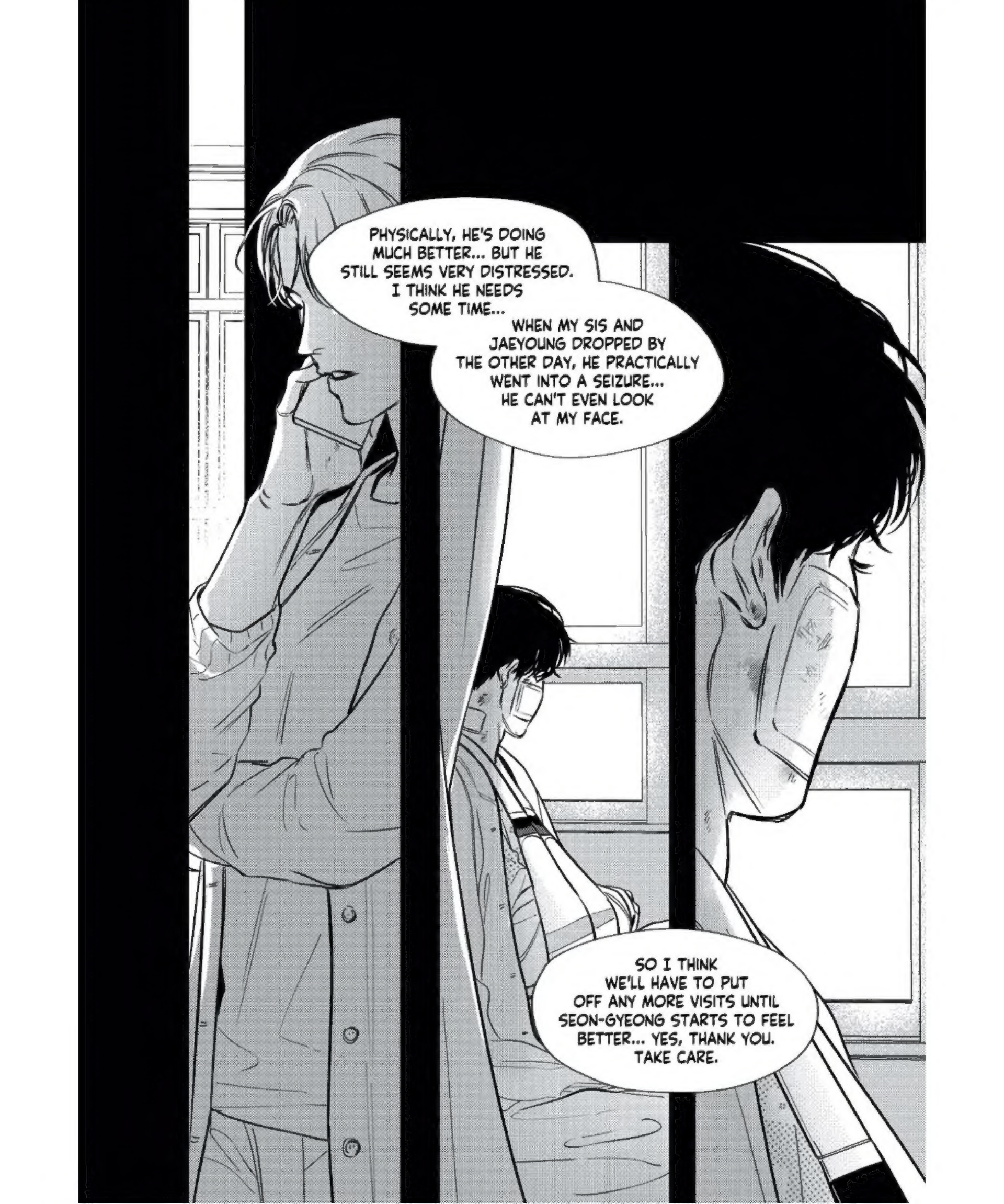
BUT AS IF GOD HAD
OTHER PLANS FOR ME,
MY WOUNDS RECOVERED
QUICKLY WITH EACH
PASSING DAY.



MY VISIBLE PROGRESS
EVENTUALLY PUT A FEW SMILES
ON MY AUNT'S FACE.



BUT I DIDN'T DARE LOOK AT
HER SMILE BECAUSE IT PAINFULLY
REMINDS ME OF SOMEONE
WHO WAS NO LONGER AROUND.



PHYSICALLY, HE'S DOING
MUCH BETTER... BUT HE
STILL SEEMS VERY DISTRESSED.
I THINK HE NEEDS
SOME TIME...

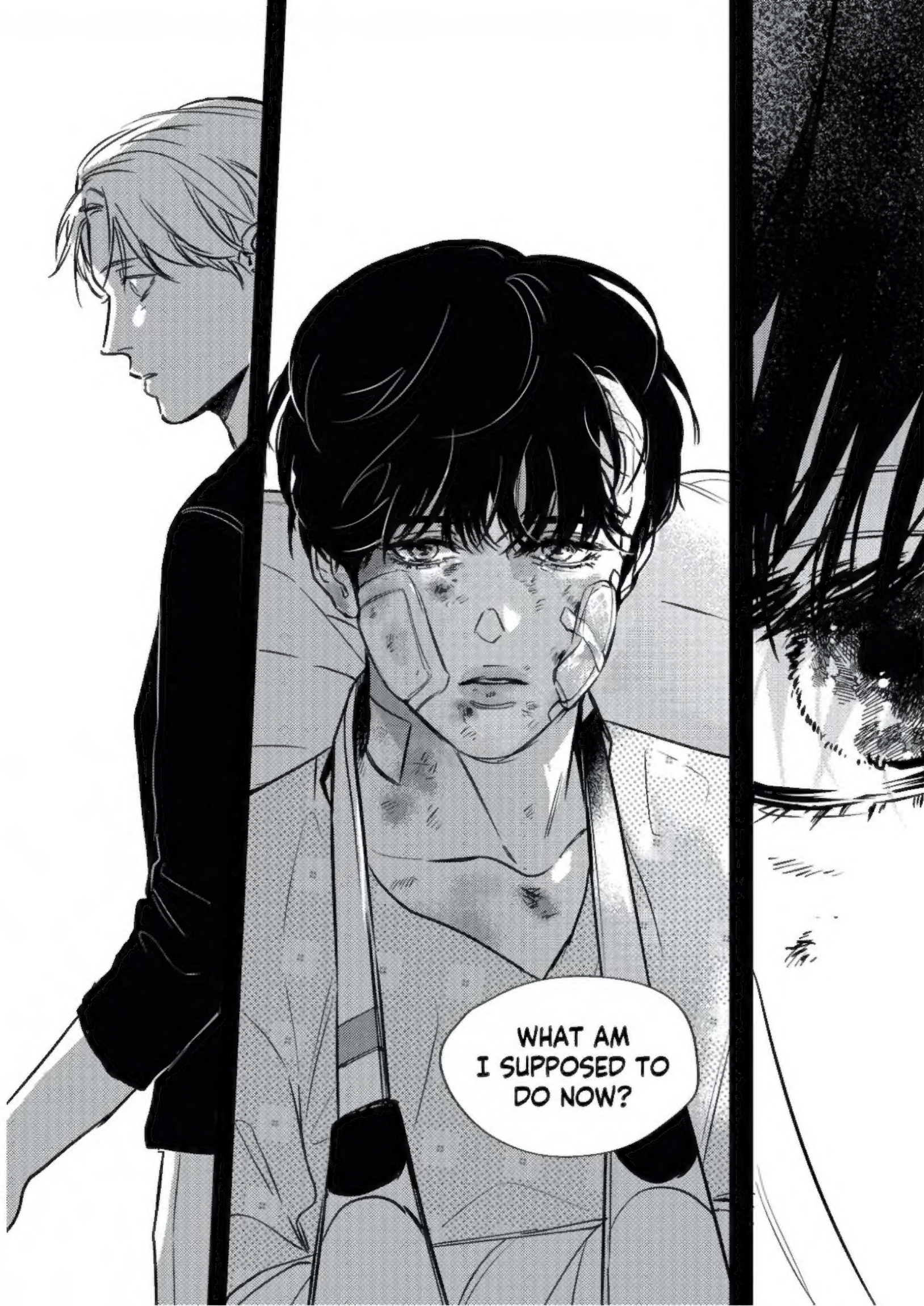
WHEN MY SIS AND
JAEYOUNG DROPPED BY
THE OTHER DAY, HE PRACTICALLY
WENT INTO A SEIZURE...
HE CAN'T EVEN LOOK
AT MY FACE.

SO I THINK
WE'LL HAVE TO PUT
OFF ANY MORE VISITS UNTIL
SEON-GYEONG STARTS TO FEEL
BETTER... YES, THANK YOU.
TAKE CARE.

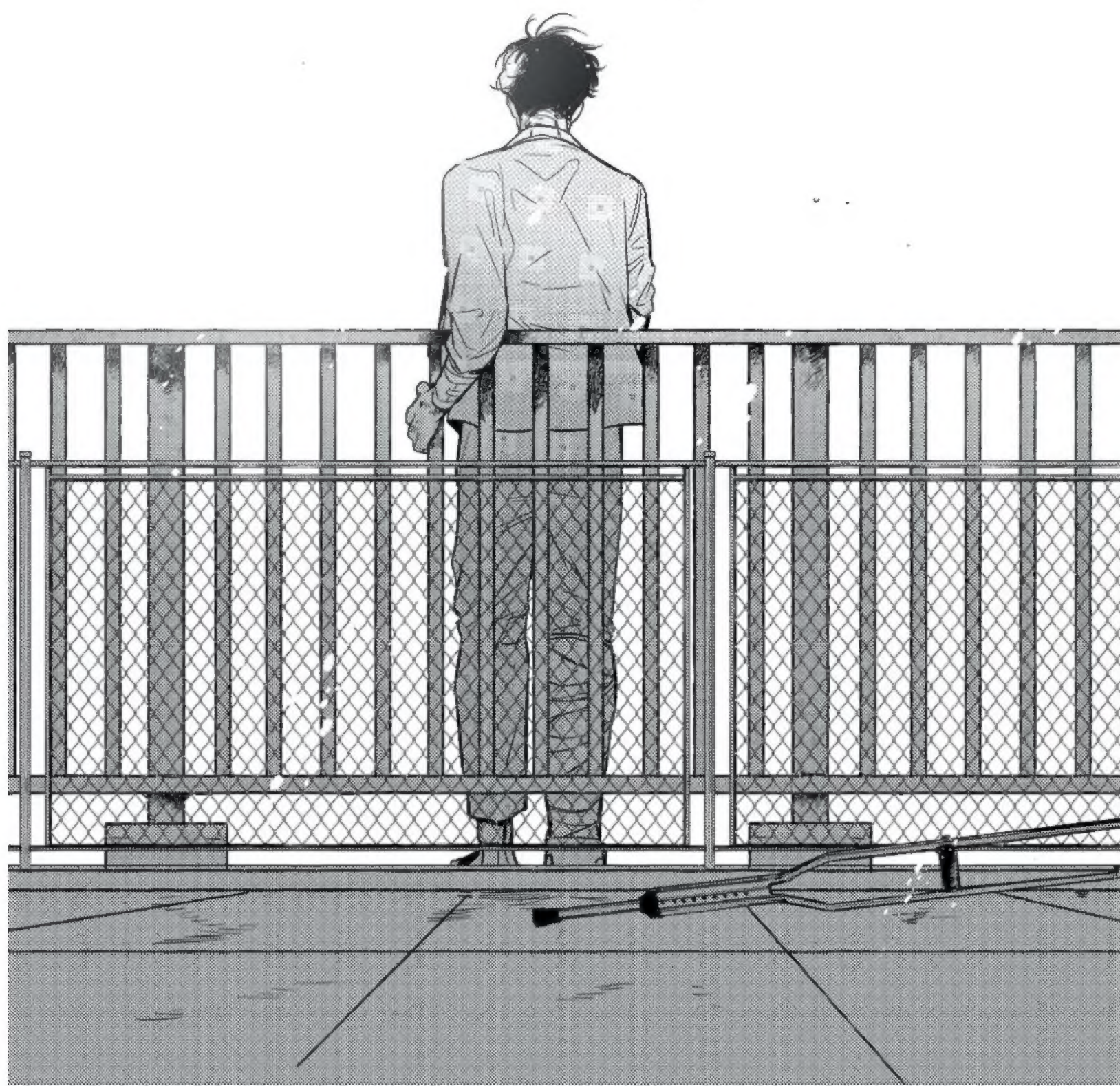


AUNTIE.






THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME
I HEARD MY OWN VOICE
AFTER THE ACCIDENT...
AND IT WAS PATHETIC.





IT WAS SO UNFAIR.

THE INJUSTICE OF IT ALL
WAS MADDENING.




I COULDN'T STOP ASKING
WHY IT HAD TO BE THEM
AND NOT ME.
WHY? WHY? WHY?

WHY DID
I SURVIVE?



WHY MUST I SUFFER
SO MUCH?

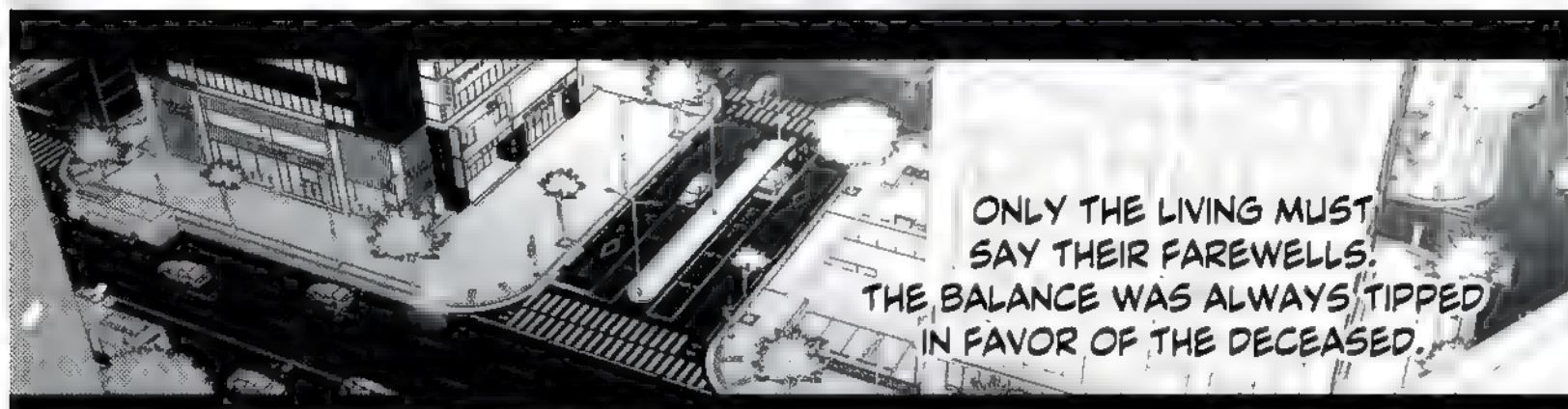


IRONICALLY, I FOUND
THE ANSWER TO THAT
THE MOMENT I STEPPED
ALONG THE LEDGE OF
THE HOSPITAL ROOFTOP.



I WAS THE ONLY ONE
WHO WAS SUFFERING.

THE DEAD HAVE NO REGRETS.
ONLY THE LIVING MUST BEAR THEM.



ONLY THE LIVING MUST
SAY THEIR FAREWELLS.
THE BALANCE WAS ALWAYS TIPPED
IN FAVOR OF THE DECEASED.

THIS FEELING OF ANGUISH
AND ANGER AGAINST INJUSTICE
WAS MINE TO BEAR ALONE.

BEARING THIS INDIGNATION
WAS ALSO THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY
OF THOSE WHO WERE "LUCKY"
ENOUGH TO LIVE ANOTHER DAY.

THAT'S WHEN I FINALLY
BEGAN TO UNDERSTAND.

I FINALLY MADE
PEACE WITH IT ALL.

I COULD PAY THE PRICE
BY DOING AS I WISHED.







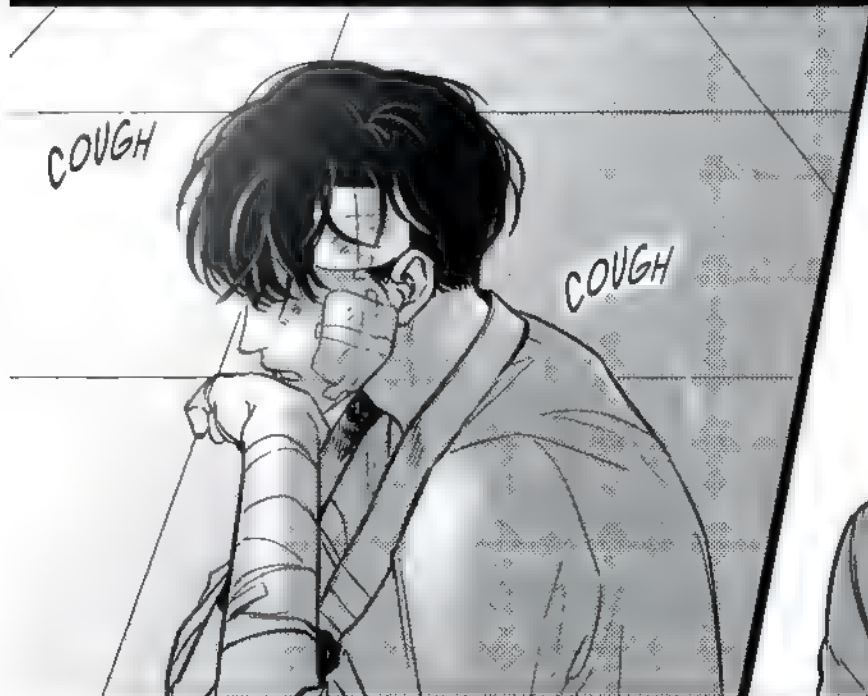
THIS



**THE HELL
DO YOU THINK
YOU'RE DOING?**

**YOU ALMOST
GOT YOURSELF
KILLED!**

**ARE YOU
OUT OF YOUR
MIND?**





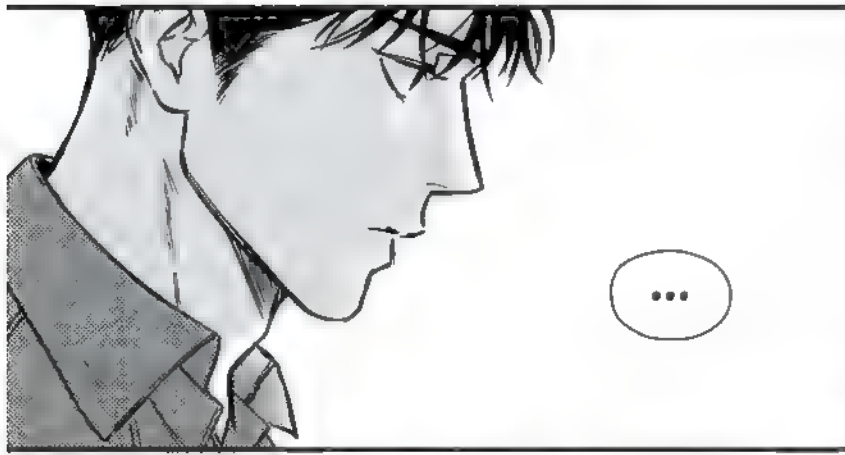
WHAT
ARE YOU-

YOU'RE THAT KID
WHO GOT ADMITTED TO
THE ICU FROM A BIG ACCIDENT
A FEW DAYS AGO,
RIGHT?



LET GO
OF ME.

YOU STALKER.



I SAID LET GO,
YOU SON OF
A BITCH!!



I KNOW YOU'LL
PULL THIS SAME SHIT
SOMEWHERE ELSE IF I DO.
I WON'T LET YOU GO.





**YOU
DON'T KNOW ME!!**



**YOU SAW
ME AT THE ICU?
THEN DON'T YOU GET WHY
I'M TRYING TO DIE,
YOU BASTARD?!**




**WHY ELSE
WOULD I TRY
TO DIE...?!**

**WHY
SHOULD I...!**



WHY
SHOULD I...

WHY AM I...
STILL ALIVE?



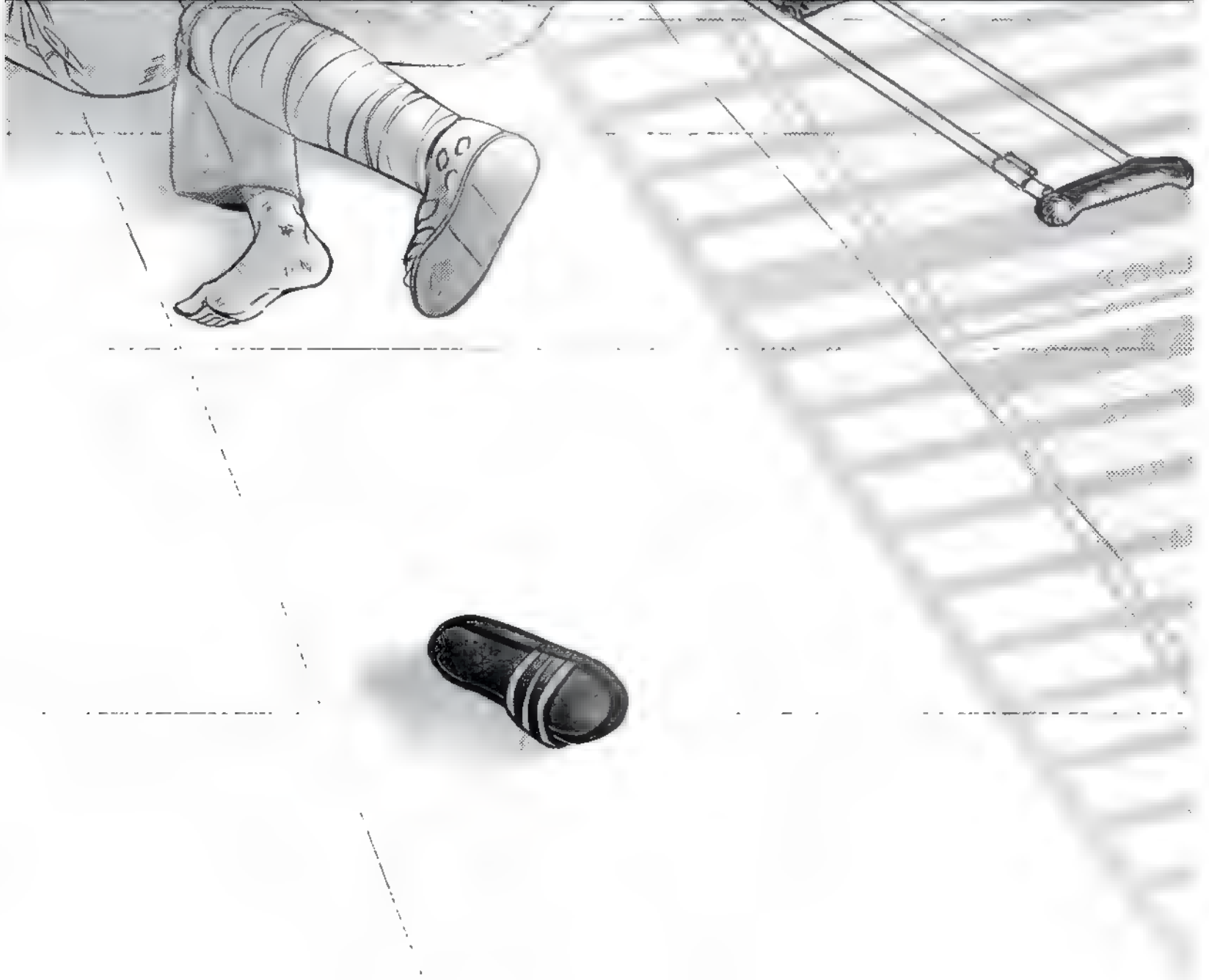
WHY DID
IT HAVE TO
BE ME?

WHY COULDN'T
THEY JUST KILL ME
TOO...?

WHY AM I
THE ONLY ONE
STILL ALIVE...?

WHY ME...?



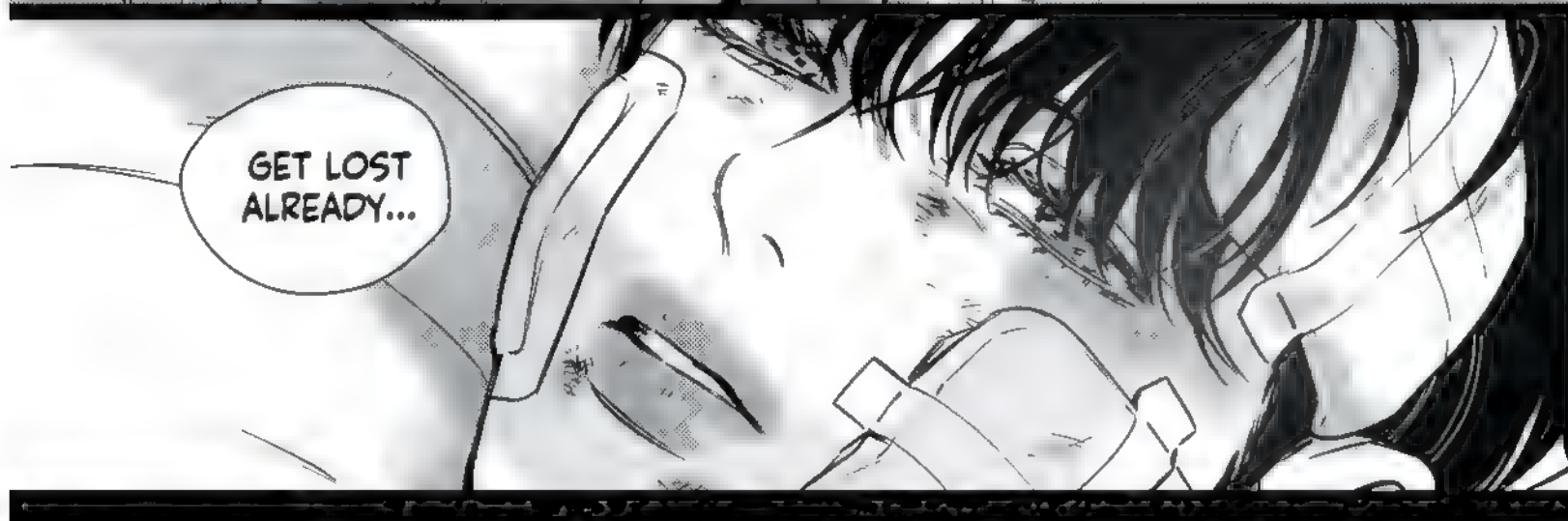


SORRY TO
TROUBLE YOU
WITH THIS. I'LL BE
BACK AS SOON AS I CAN
PLEASE TAKE GOOD
CARE OF MY
NEPHEW.

NO
WORRIES.
TAKE YOUR
TIME.

BLINK

MY
NECK HURTS...





YOU SON OF
A BITCH...

WHY SHOULD
I THANK YOU?

OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER
WAS HARDLY PLEASANT
FOR EITHER OF US.

EVEN SO,
HE STILL VISITED ME
FROM TIME TO TIME.

IT WAS MORE LIKE
HE WAS MONITORING ME
INSTEAD OF REALLY
COMING TO SEE ME.



BUT AT THE TIME,
I COULD FEEL NOTHING
BUT CONTEMPT FOR HIS SENSE
OF RESPONSIBILITY AND
HIS CASUAL SMILE.

I JUST DESPISED HIM.
I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF.

FWIP

I BLAMED HIM
ENTIRELY FOR MY FAILED
SUICIDE ATTEMPT.

SHIFTING THE BLAME
FESTERED INTO HATRED,
MAKING IT EVEN EASIER TO TAKE
MY ANGER OUT ON HIM.



BUT HE KEPT ON CHECKING IN AS IF NOTHING HAPPENED.



HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?

...



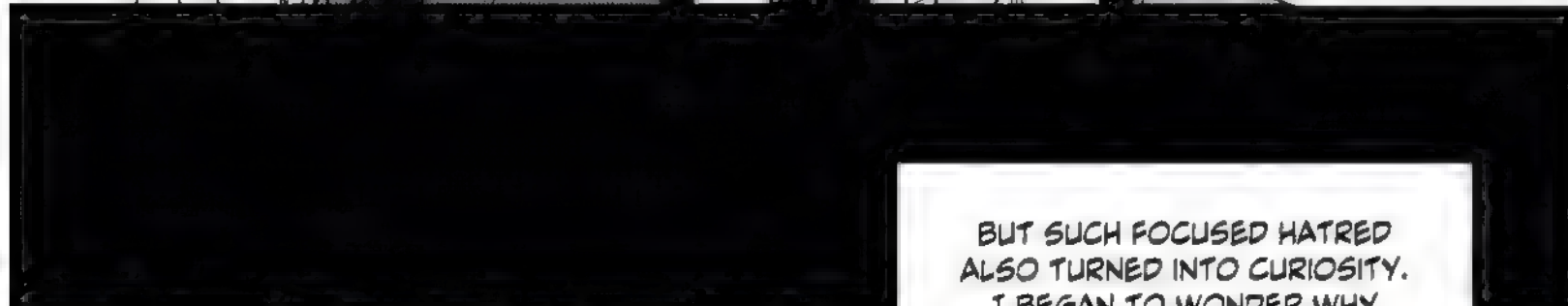
HMPH

BUT THAT JUST MADE ME GROW EVEN MORE BITTER.



DAMN, I MUST'VE GAINED THE POWER OF INVISIBILITY!

CAN'T THIS ASSHOLE JUST GET SICK OR SOMETHING?

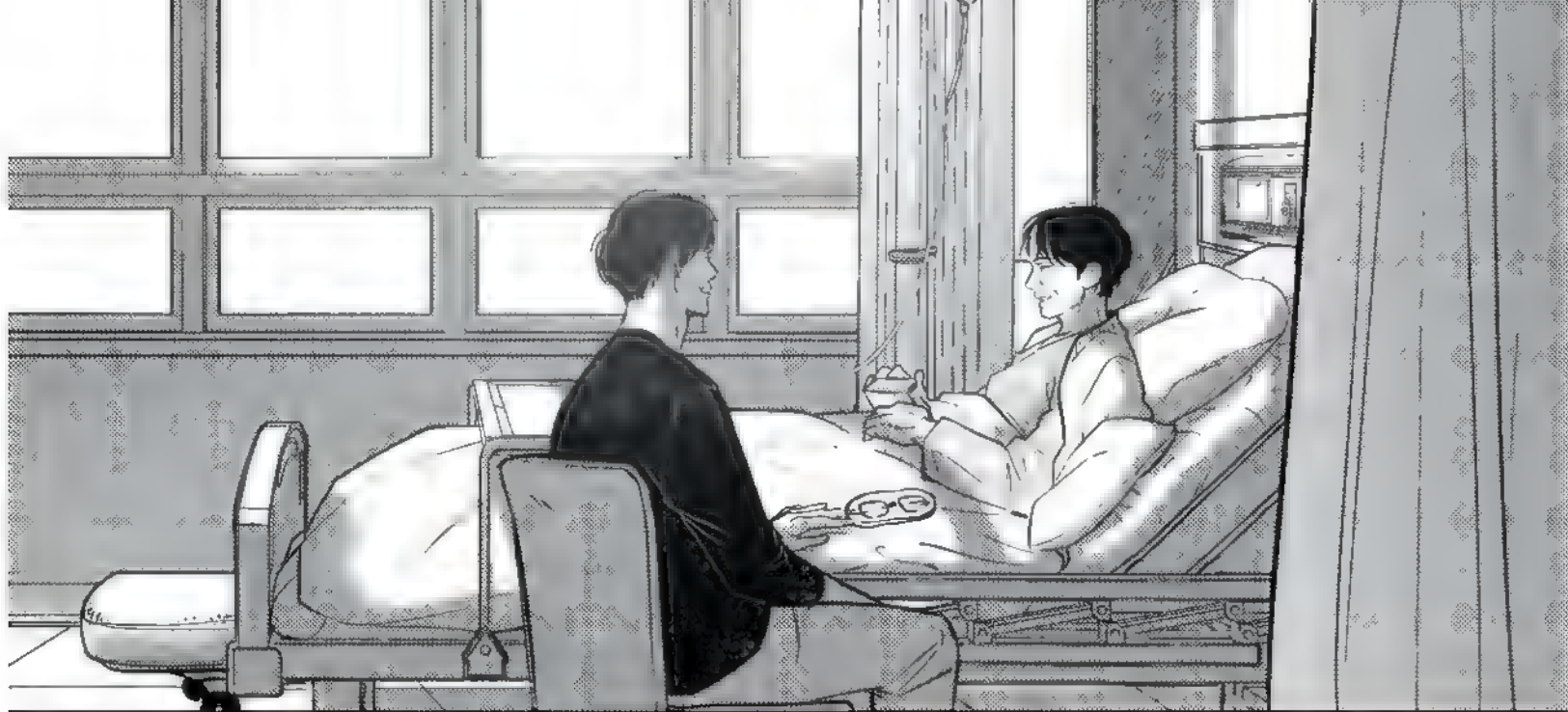


BUT SUCH FOCUSED HATRED ALSO TURNED INTO CURIOSITY. I BEGAN TO WONDER WHY SOMEONE SO HEALTHY WOULD STAY AT THE HOSPITAL.



I WAS PROBABLY STUPID ENOUGH TO THINK I COULD DIG UP SOME DIRT ON HIM.



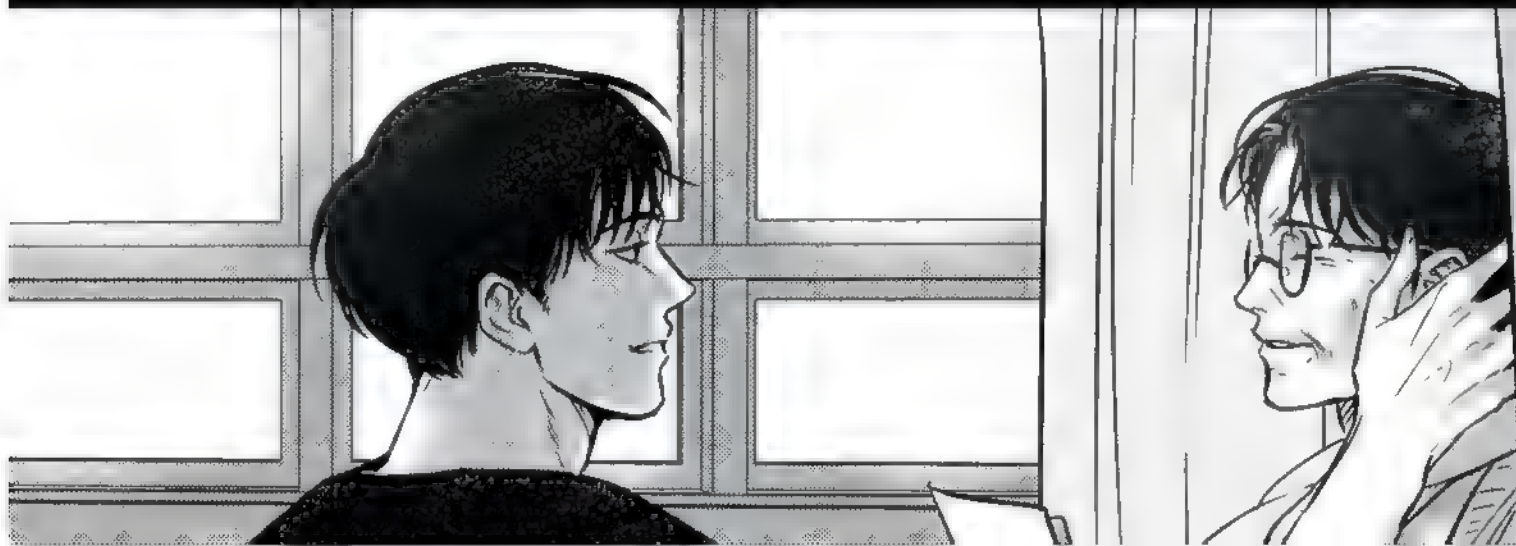


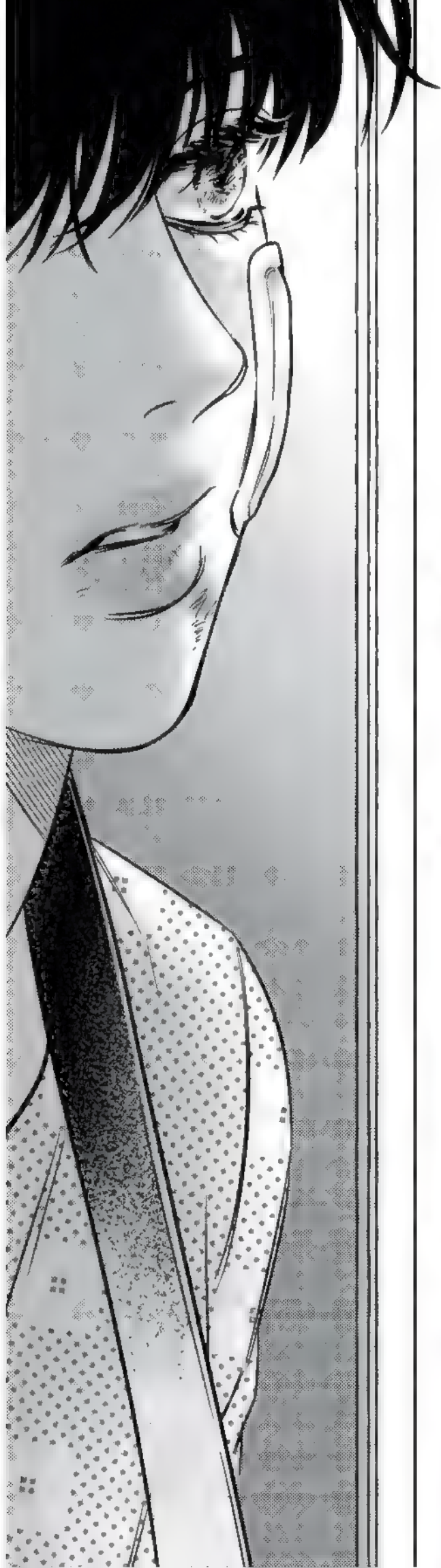
HE'S... FAMILY
WITH A PATIENT?

NO WONDER
HE WAS ALWAYS IN
REGULAR CLOTHES.



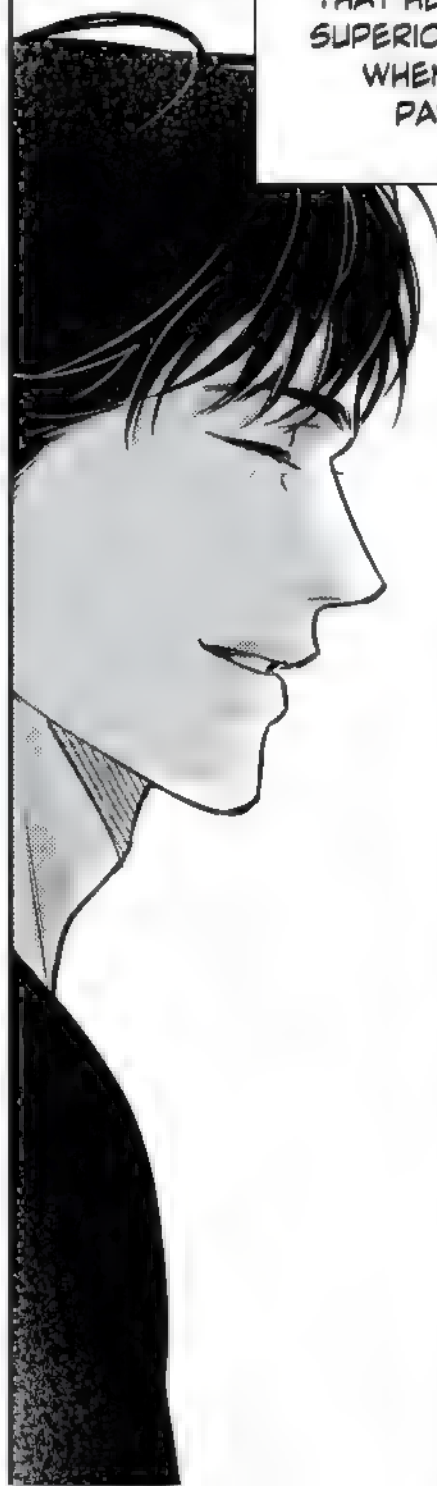
WHY COULDN'T HE
JUST FOCUS ON TAKING
CARE OF HIS FAMILY?
THAT NOSY BASTARD.





ALL I COULD THINK WAS
THAT HE WAS MAKING
A MOCKERY OF ME.

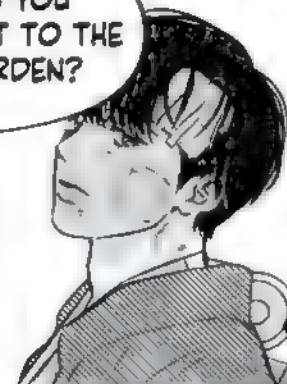
THAT HE MUST HAVE FELT
SUPERIOR ABOUT HIMSELF
WHEN HE SAW HOW
PATHETIC I AM.



I CAN'T
STAND THAT
GUY...

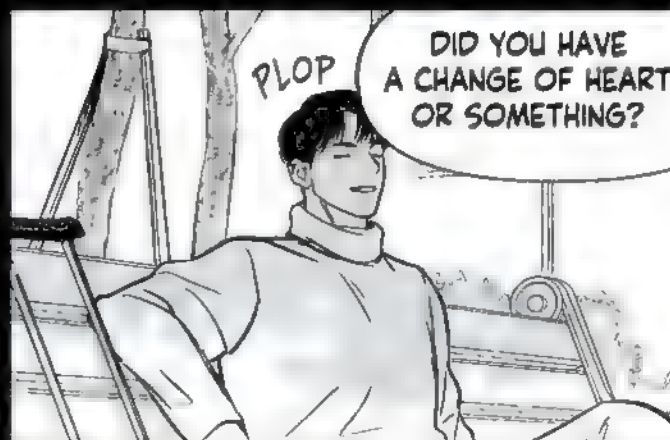


WHAT BRINGS YOU
ALL THE WAY OUT TO THE
OUTDOOR GARDEN?



PLOP

DID YOU HAVE
A CHANGE OF HEART
OR SOMETHING?



UGH...
HOW DOES HE MANAGE
TO TRACK ME DOWN
EVERY SINGLE TIME?



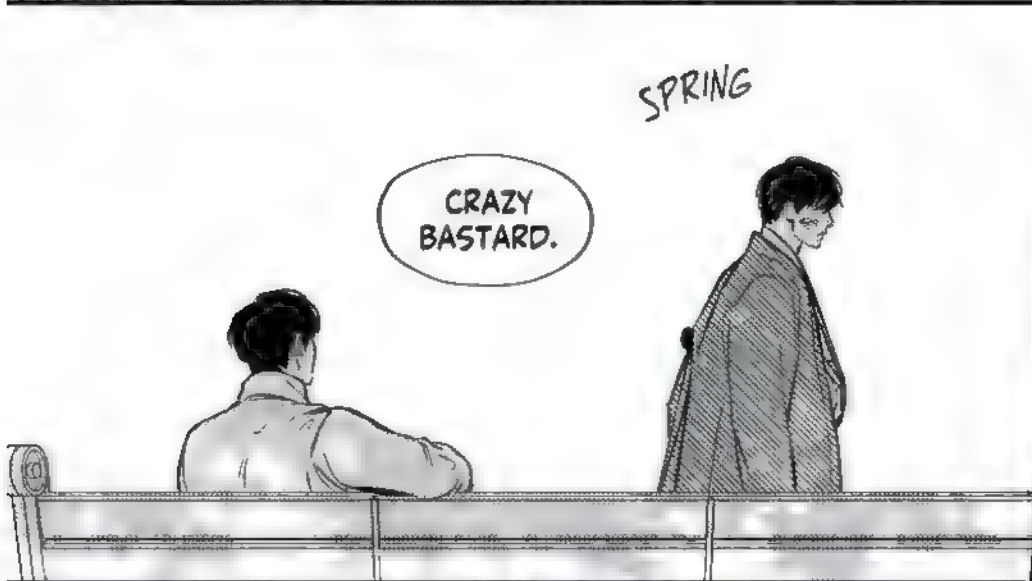
SIGH

WHY DON'T YOU
JUST GO TAKE CARE
OF YOUR FAMILY?

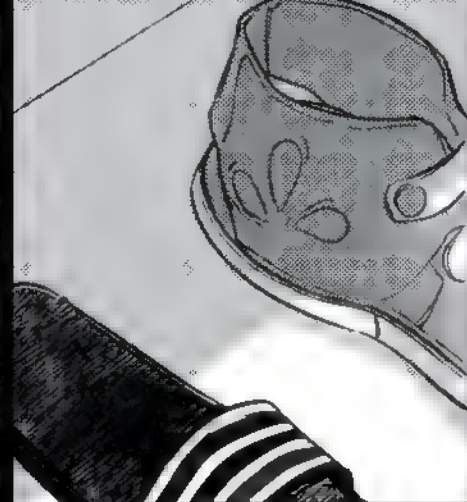


AH, SO HAVE I FINALLY
BECOME WORTHY OF YOUR
MAJESTY'S ATTENTION?





CLACK
TRUDGE



I DIDN'T WANT TO
SEE THOSE MOCKING
EYES OF HIS AGAIN.

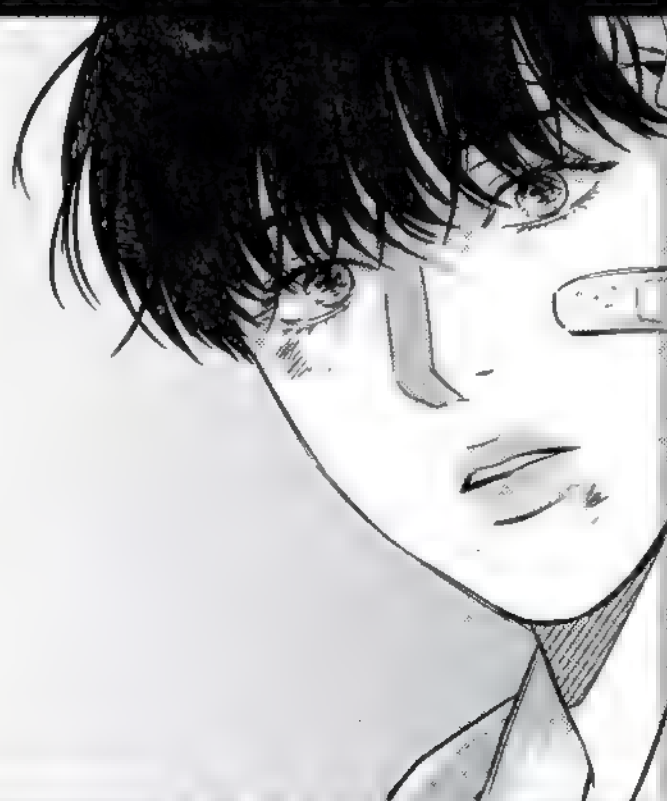


I DON'T KNOW
WHAT IT WAS HE SAID
THAT TICKED ME OFF
SO MUCH...

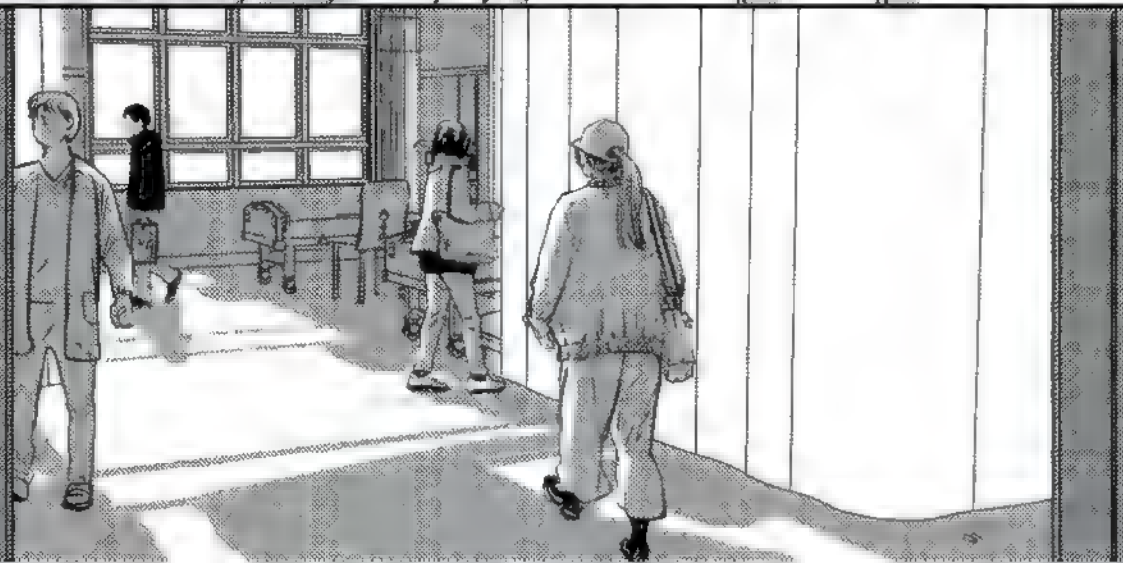
BUT THAT ODD CURIOSITY KEPT
POKING THROUGH ALL THAT HATRED...
WHICH GAVE ME ALL THE MORE
REASON NOT TO VENTURE OUT AGAIN.

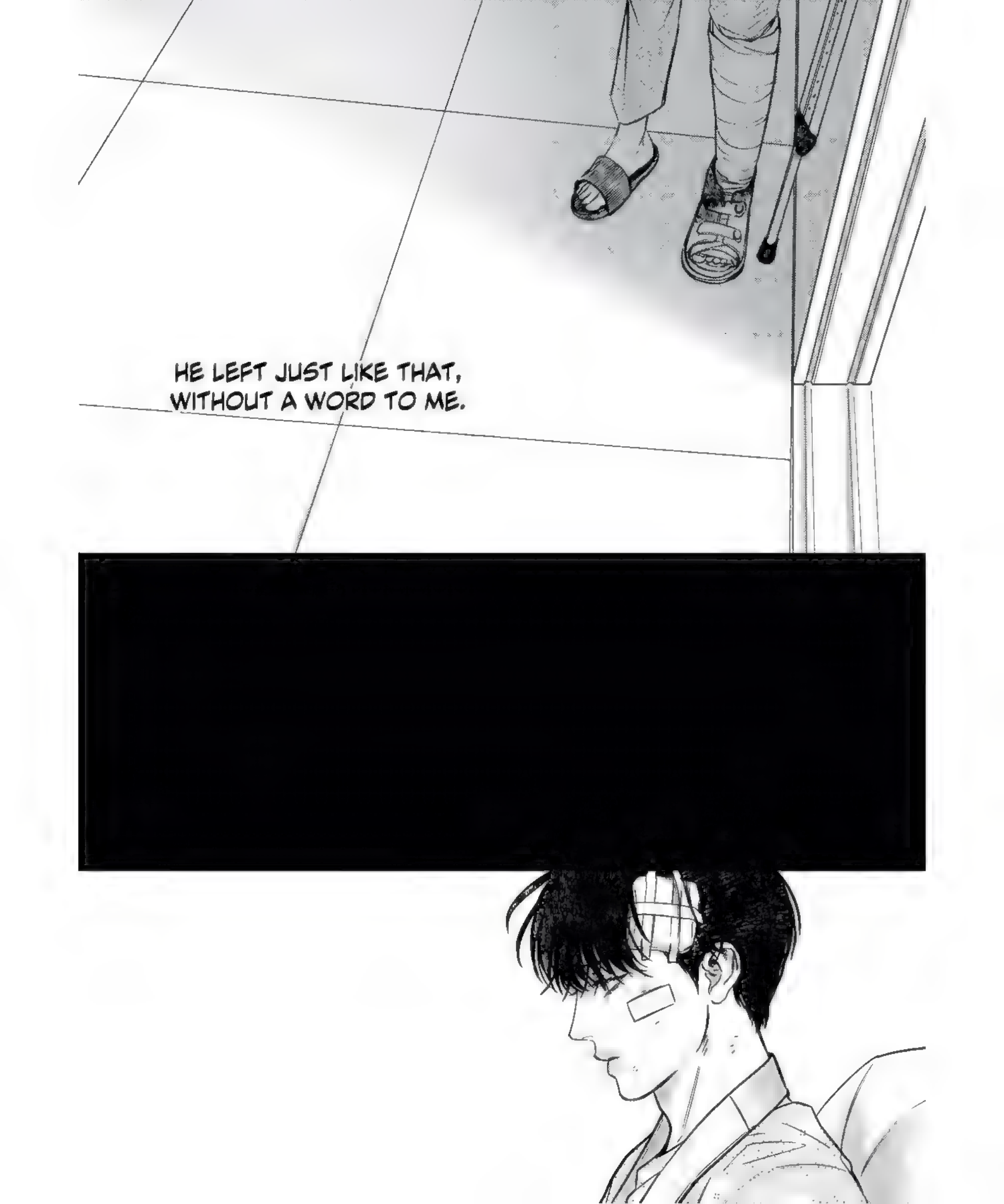
BUT I NEVER LEFT
MY HOSPITAL ROOM
AFTER THAT.

WHEN MY BITTER RESENTMENT
BEGAN TO WANE A LITTLE AFTER
TWO WEEKS OR SO,
I FOUND MYSELF SNEAKING
TO HIS ROOM.

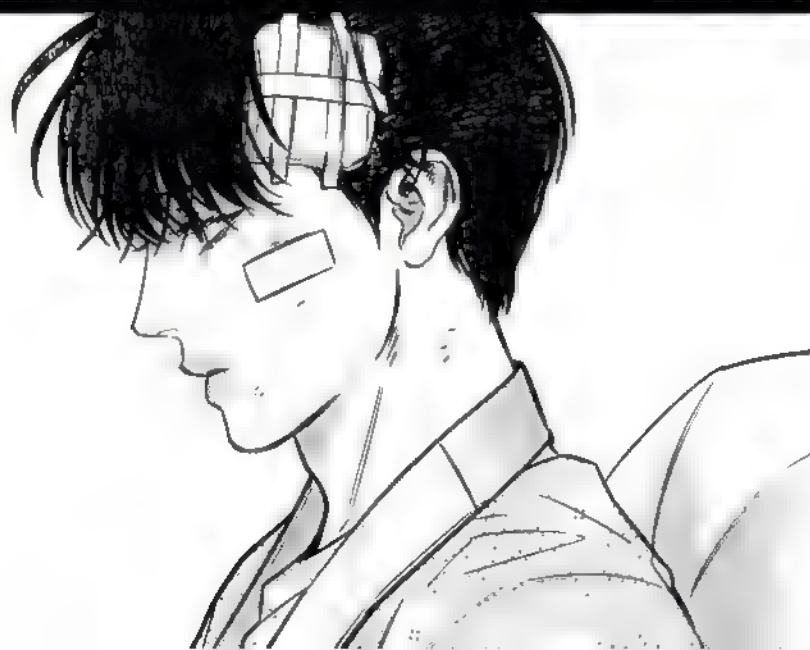


THE BED WAS EMPTY.





HE LEFT JUST LIKE THAT,
WITHOUT A WORD TO ME.





AT THE TIME,
I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND
WHY I WAS SO SHOCKED.

IN FACT, I DIDN'T EVEN
RECOGNIZE WHAT I FELT WAS SHOCK.
BUT I STILL BEHAVED AS IF HE HAD
BETRAYED ME SOMEHOW.

I COULDN'T JUST GET OVER IT.
SO I WENT TO HIS ROOM AND
ASKED AROUND ABOUT HIM.

OH, THAT OLD LADY?
SHE HAD TO STAY FOR A
WHILE BECAUSE HER
CANCER CAME BACK...

YOU MUST BE FRIENDS
WITH HER GRANDSON,
I PRESUME? THE POOR LAD'S
REALLY HAD IT ROUGH, JUGGLING
BETWEEN SCHOOL AND
TAKING CARE OF HIS
GRANDMOTHER.

IT SEEMED
LIKE IT'S JUST THE
TWO OF THEM, WITHOUT
ANY OTHER FAMILY...

ANYWAY, I NEVER
GOT HER PHONE NUMBER,
SO I WOULDN'T KNOW HOW
TO REACH THEM EITHER.
SORRY, SWEETIE.



TWO MONTHS PASSED...
AND I WAS FINALLY RELEASED
FROM THE HOSPITAL.

I HAD TO QUICKLY ACCLIMATE
TO MY DAILY LIFE AGAIN.
BUT NOTHING WOULD EVER
BE THE SAME EITHER.

THE ABSENCE OF MY
PARENTS MADE ME STICK OUT
LIKE A SORE THUMB
EVERYWHERE I WENT.

THE ONLY TIME I COULD ESCAPE
FROM SUCH FEELING OF ALIENATION
WAS WHEN I THOUGHT OF HIM.

I KEPT LOOKING FOR HIM
EVEN AFTER I RETURNED TO SCHOOL.
I TRIED VIRTUALLY EVERY POSSIBLE
MEANS OF TRACKING HIM DOWN.



WELL, EVERYTHING
A HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR
COULD THINK OF ANYWAY...
WHICH WASN'T MUCH.

I DID MANAGE TO FIND OUT
FROM ONE OF HIS GRANDMOTHER'S
HOSPITAL ROOMMATES WHICH
COLLEGE HE WENT TO.



I KEPT REPEATING
THE NAME OF HIS SCHOOL
IN MY MIND AS I TRIED TO
REMEMBER HIS FACE.

I WANTED TO SEE HIM
JUST ONE MORE TIME.



I WANTED HIM
TO FEEL THE SAME
PAIN I FELT.

I WANTED TO HURT
HIM SO BADLY IF
I EVER MET HIM AGAIN.
GET ANGRY, CURSE AT HIM,
OR EVEN KILL MYSELF
RIGHT IN FRONT OF HIM.

I WANTED TO SEE
THAT COCKY FACE
CRINGE IN DESPAIR.

"YOU DIDN'T SAVE ME."

"HYPOCRITE."

"YOU JUST DID IT FOR
SELF-SATISFACTION."

YOU MIGHT AS WELL HAVE
LEFT ME TO DIE IF YOU WERE
JUST GOING TO LEAVE LIKE THAT.

"IT'S ALL YOUR FAULT."




SPLASH

...I COULD SEE HIM
JUST ONE LAST TIME...



I WANTED TO
TELL YOU I'M DOING
OKAY NOW.

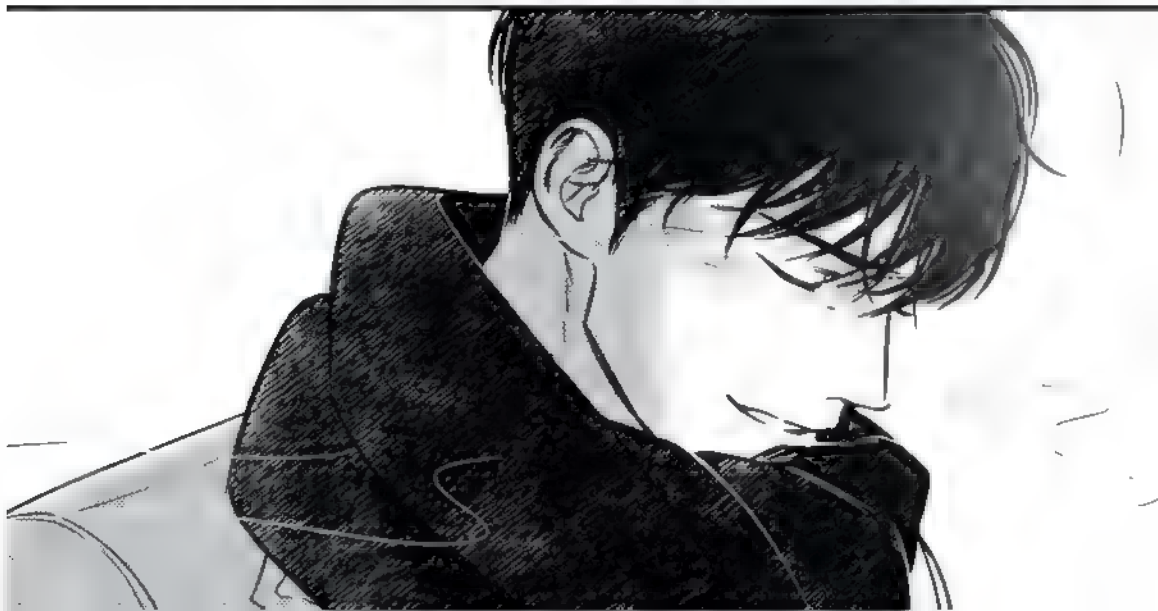
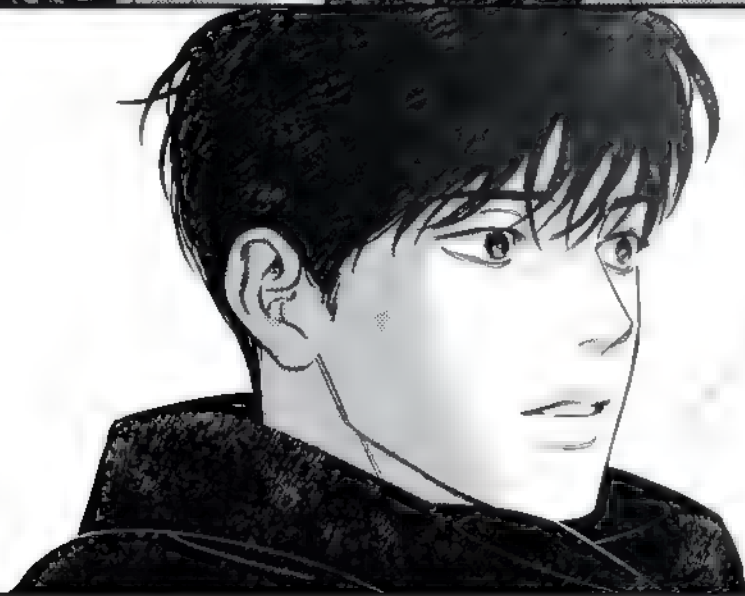
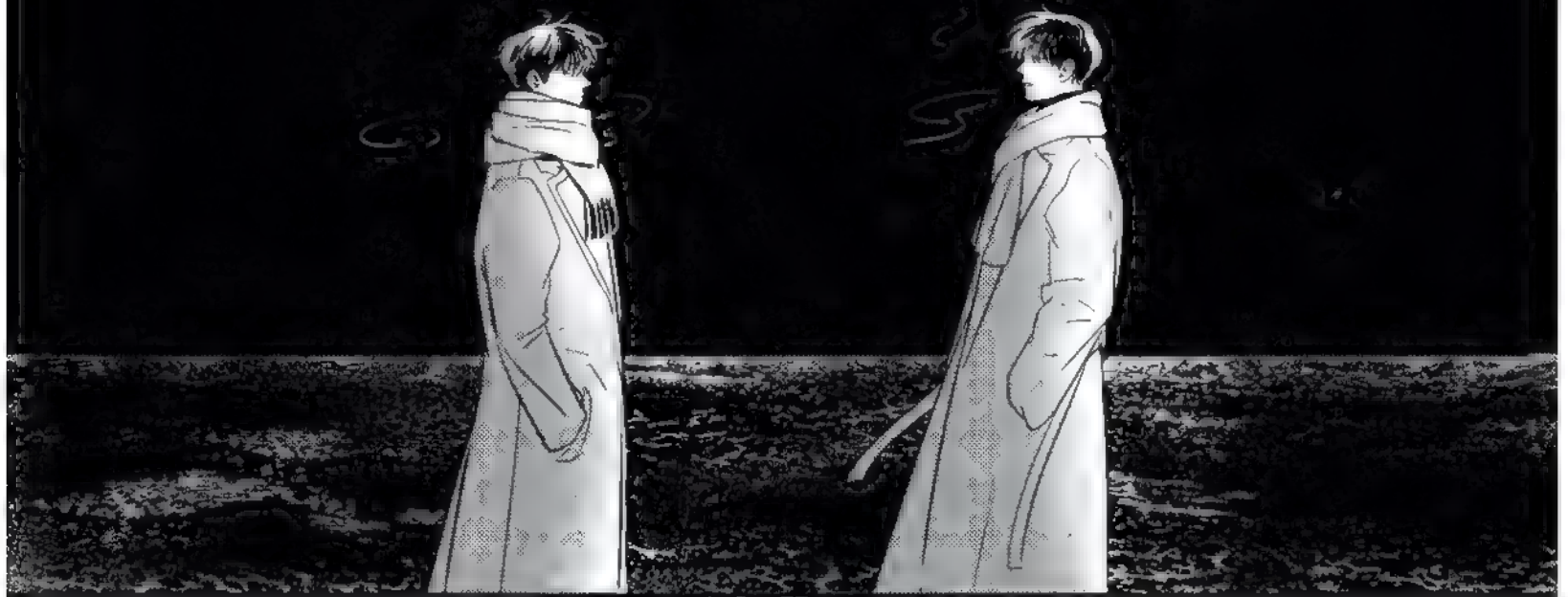




THAT I'M
STILL ALIVE THANKS
TO YOU.

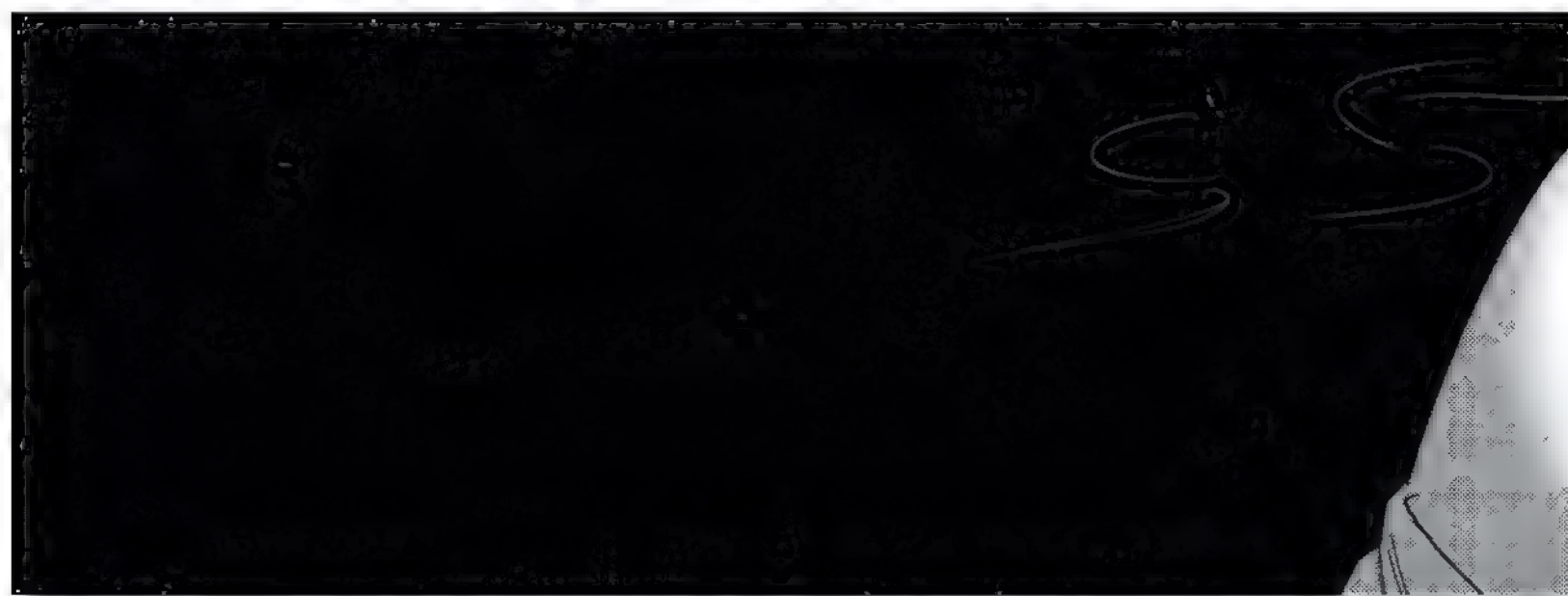
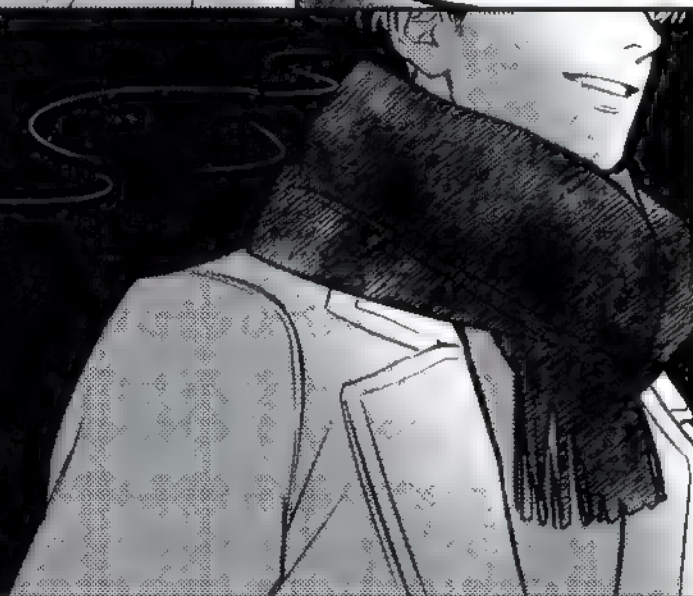
AND TELL YOU
HOW GRATEFUL I AM
FOR SAVING MY LIFE
BACK THEN.

I REALLY
WANTED TO TELL YOU
ALL OF THIS THE NEXT
TIME WE MET.



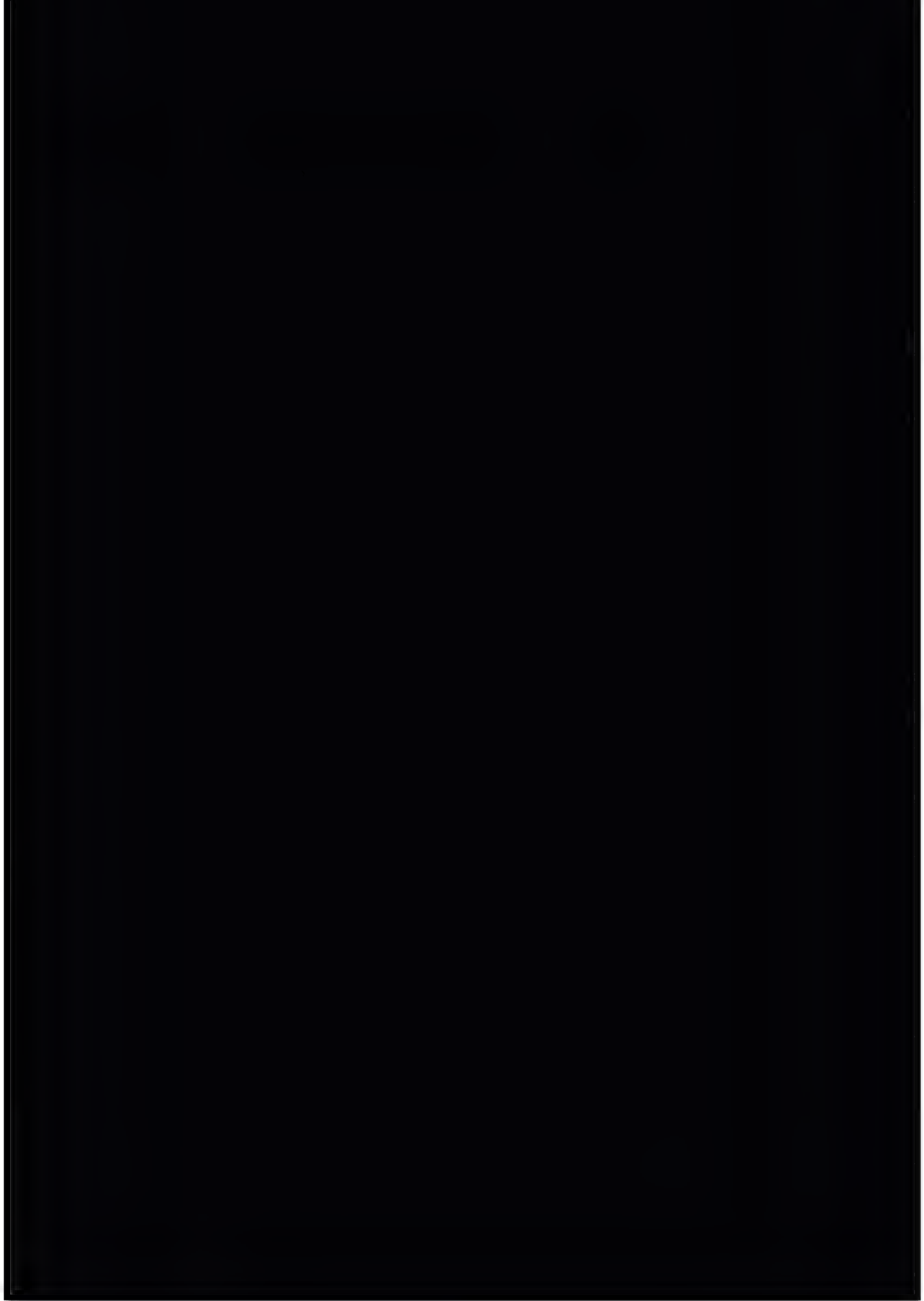


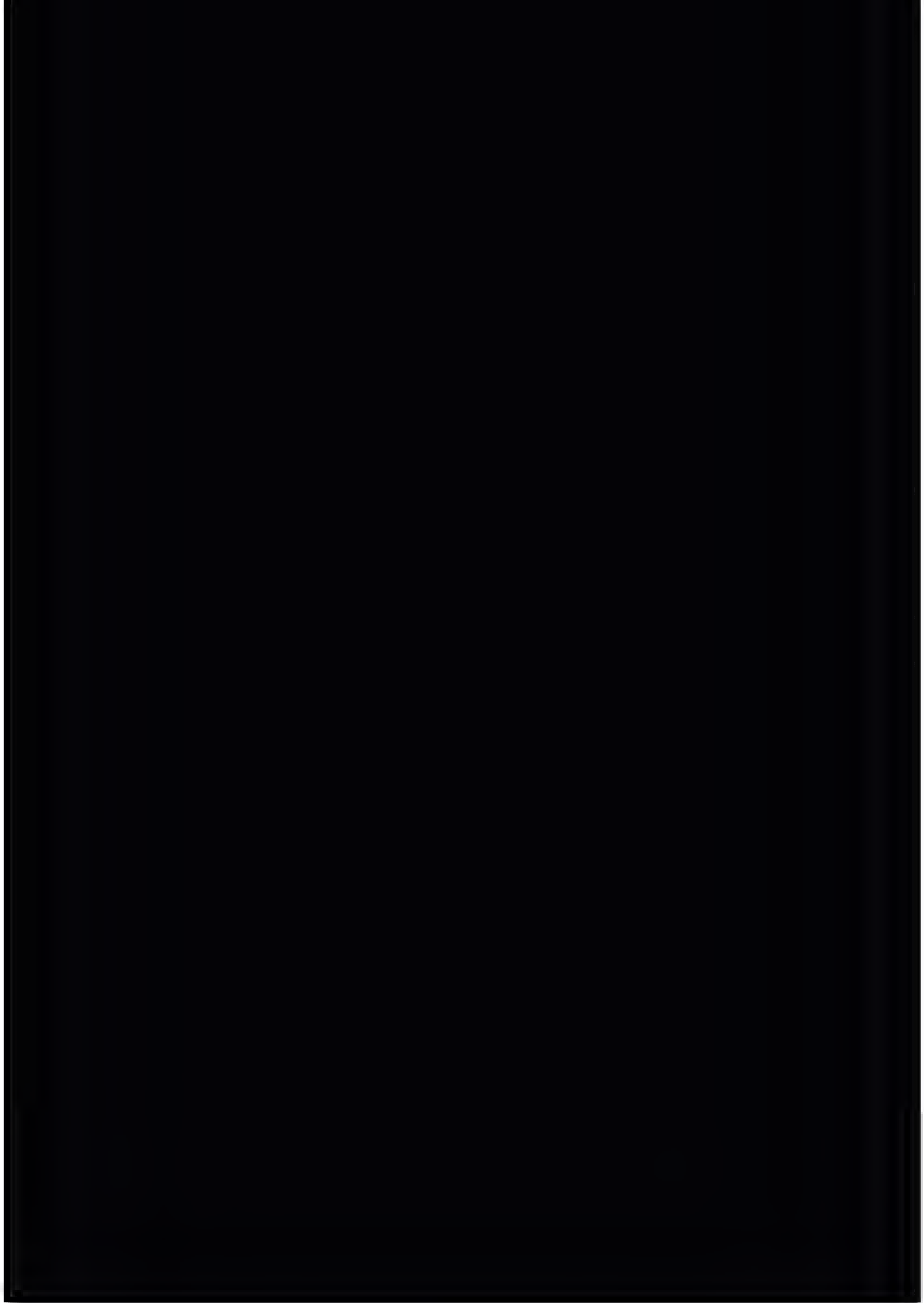
IT TOOK THIS LONG
TO GET A "THANK YOU"
OUT OF YOU, HUH...

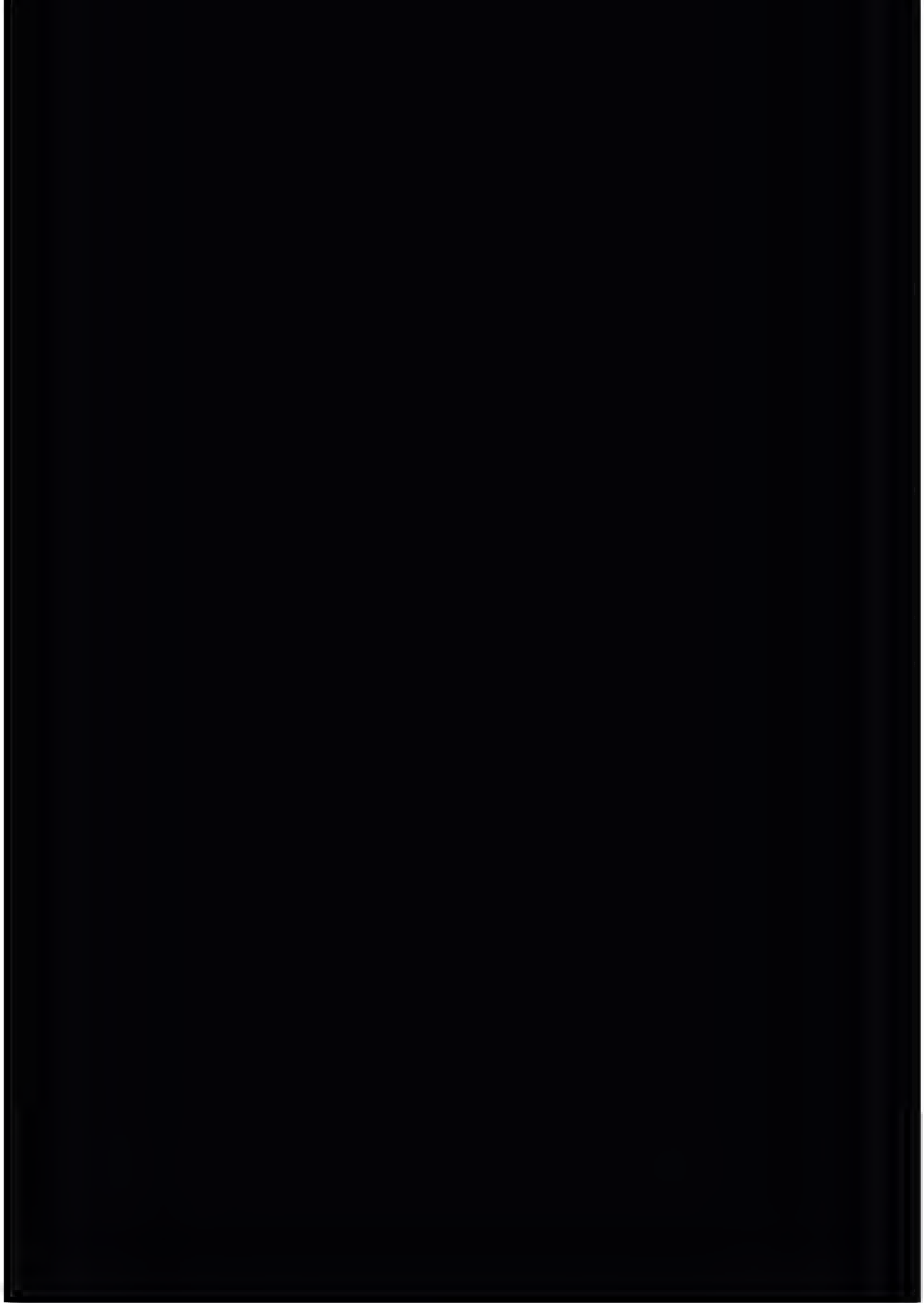


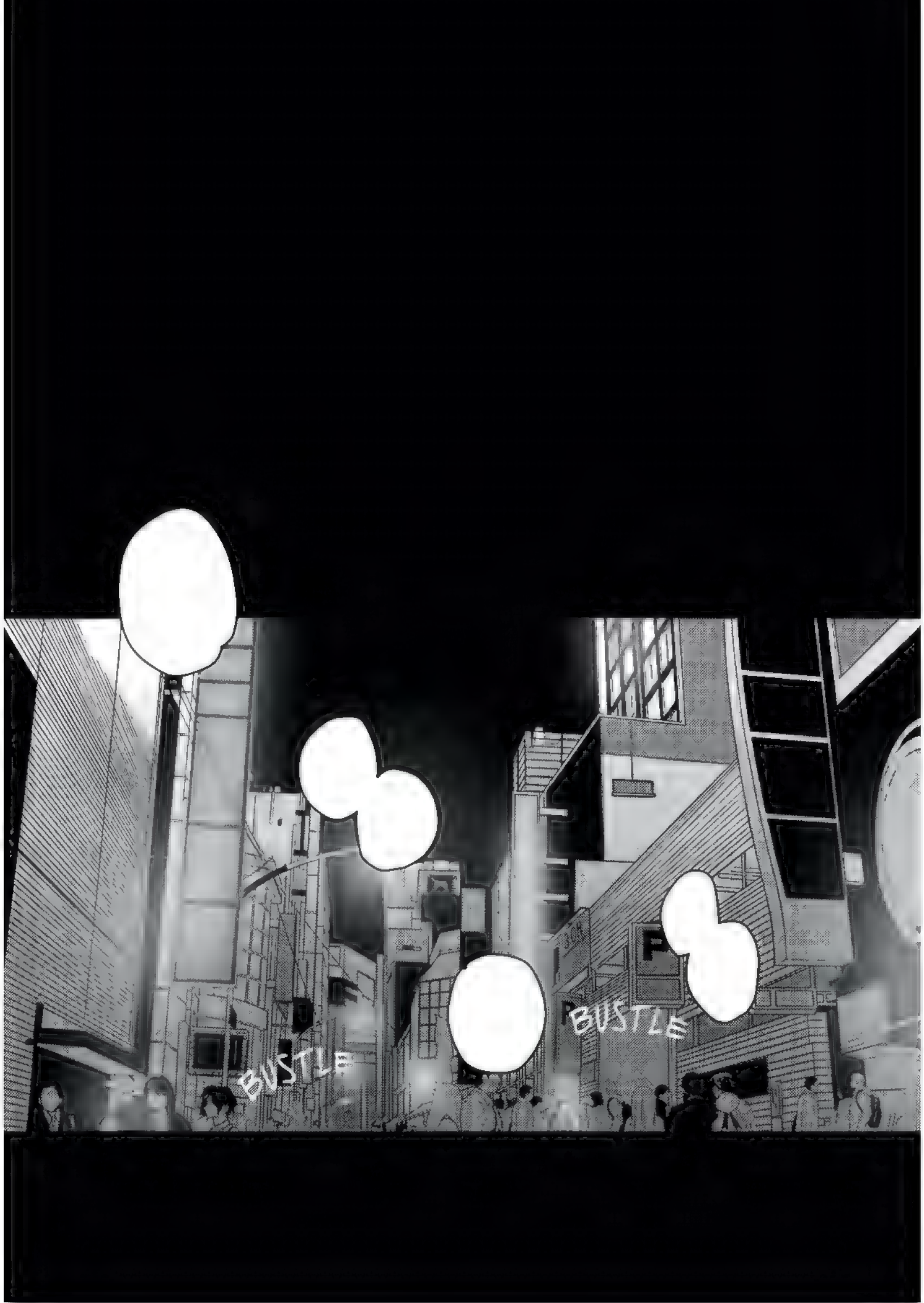
THANK YOU
FOR STAYING ALIVE.











BUSTLE

NOW WE
CAN GET LEGALLY
TRASHED! YOU
WITH ME?

WELL, DUH!
IF YOU CAN
EVEN KEEP UP
WITH US,
JAEYOUNG!

BUSTLE

YEAH, RIGHT.
YOU CAN
BARELY FINISH
A SIX-PACK!

HE'S RIGHT,
JIHOON. YOU'RE SUCH
A LIGHTWEIGHT.
HAHA.

ARGH!

HOW MANY TIMES
DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU,
I'M NOT A LIGHTWEIGHT!
Y'ALL ARE JUST
ALCOHOLICS!

PUH-LEASE!

YEAH,
YEAH. MAN UP,
WILL YOU?

UGH,
YOU'RE SUCH
AN ASSHOLE,
JAEYOUNG!

HAHAHA

YOU HEAR THAT?
YOU'D BETTER
NOT BAIL ON US
TONIGHT.

WHAT'S SO
FUNNY?

YOUR UGLY FACE.

TRY TO KEEP UP.



BAEK
SEON-GYEONG.

A close-up of a young man with dark, wavy hair and a serious expression. He is wearing a light-colored jacket over a dark shirt. The background is dark and indistinct.

BOOM

A large, stylized sound effect written in a bold, outlined font. It is positioned above a large, dark rectangular area that covers the middle section of the page.

WOAH,
THIS PLACE IS
CROWDED.

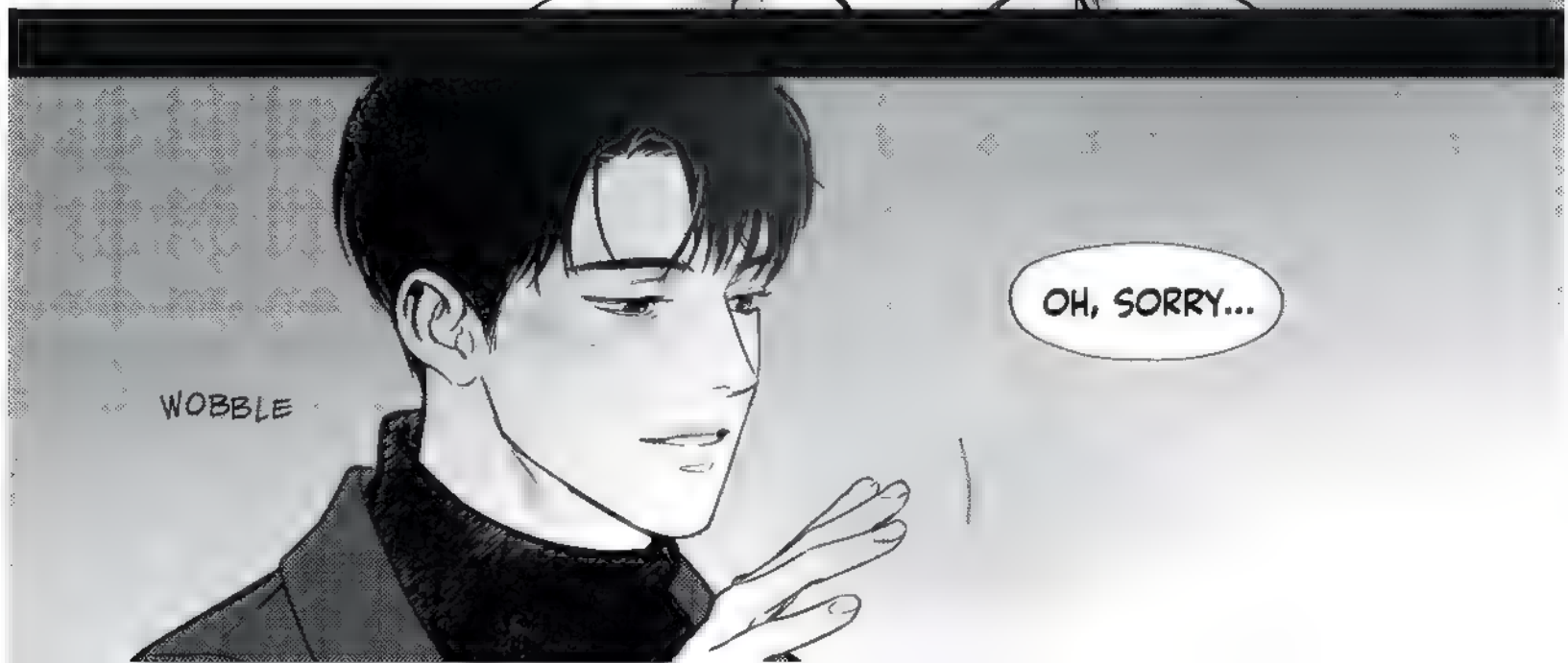
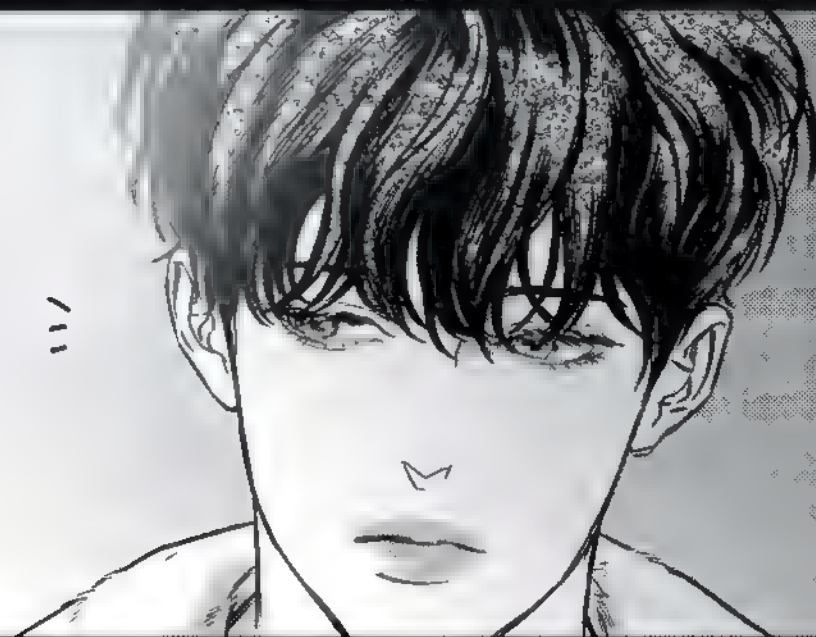
A speech bubble containing the text "WOAH, THIS PLACE IS CROWDED." It is located in the upper left of the bottom panel.

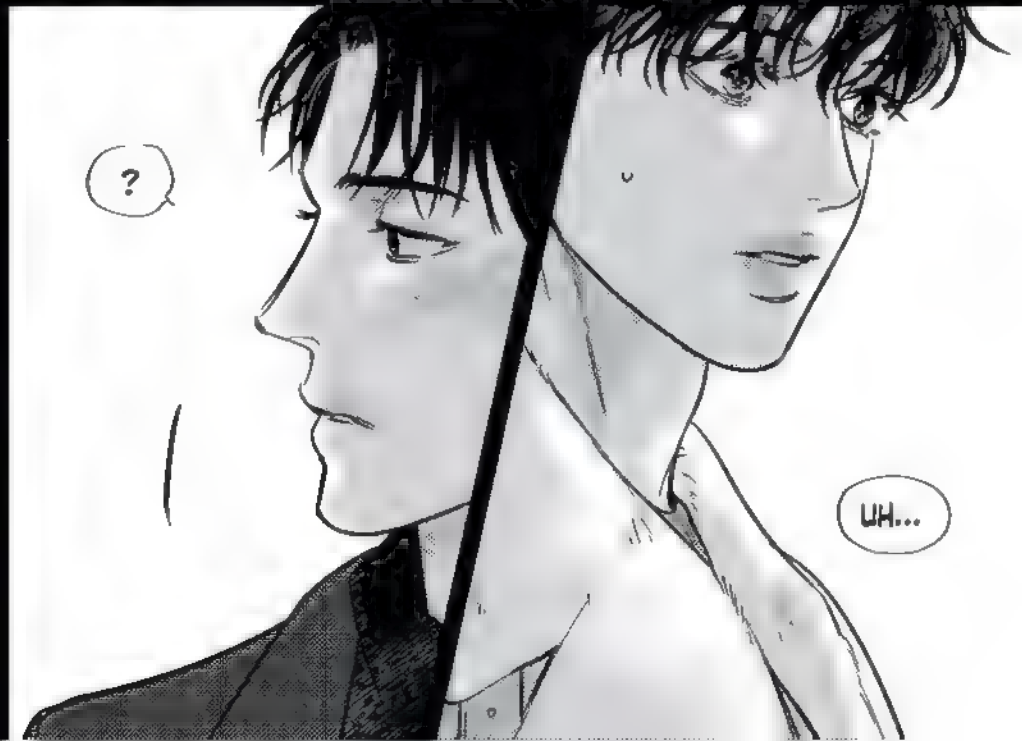
LET'S
FIND US A
SEAT FIRST.

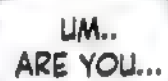
A speech bubble containing the text "LET'S FIND US A SEAT FIRST." It is located in the lower left of the bottom panel.

BOOM
BOOM

Two instances of the word "BOOM" written in a bold, outlined font, stacked vertically. They are positioned in the upper right of the bottom panel, near a large, stylized cloud-like shape.





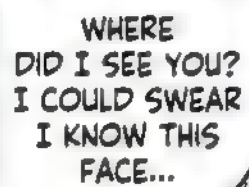


UM..
ARE YOU...



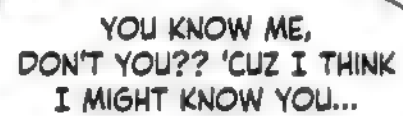
HEY,
YOU LOOK
FAMILIAR...

MUMBLE



WHERE
DID I SEE YOU?
I COULD SWEAR
I KNOW THIS
FACE...

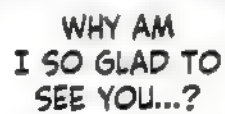
WOBBLE



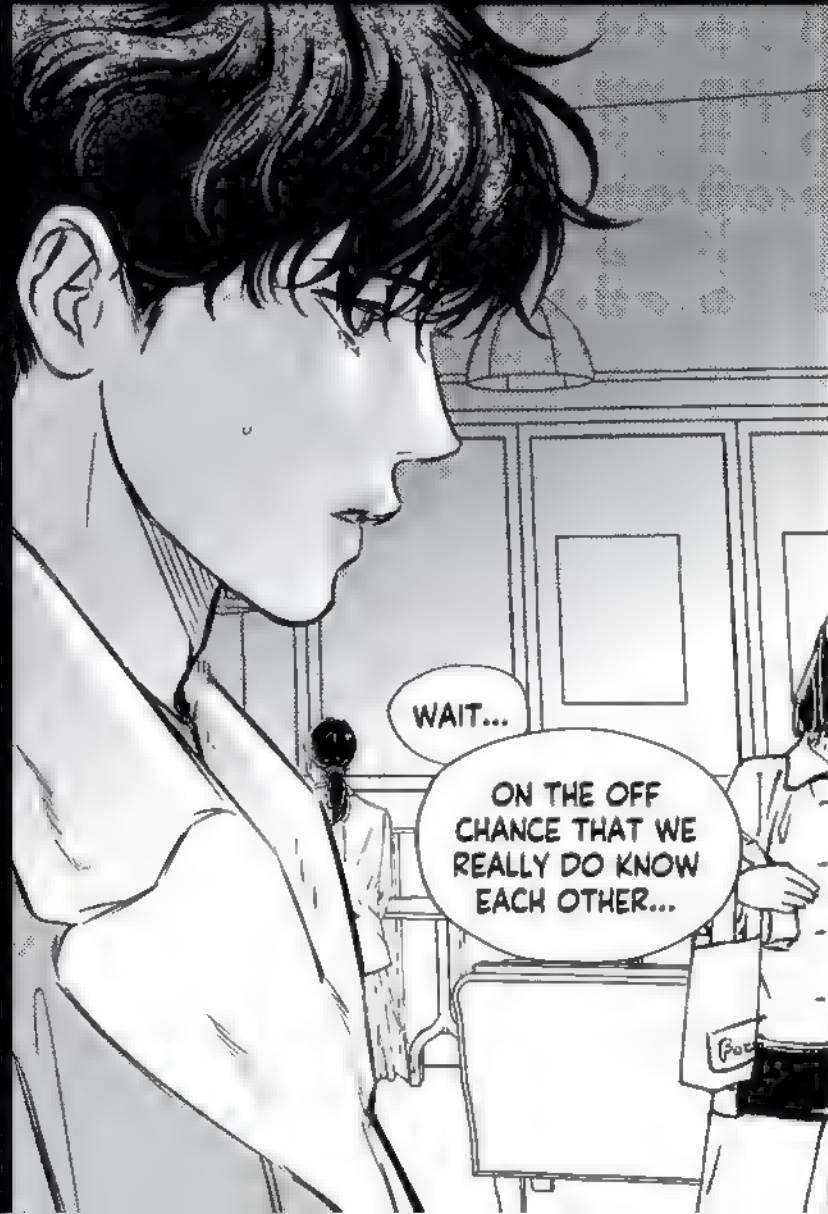
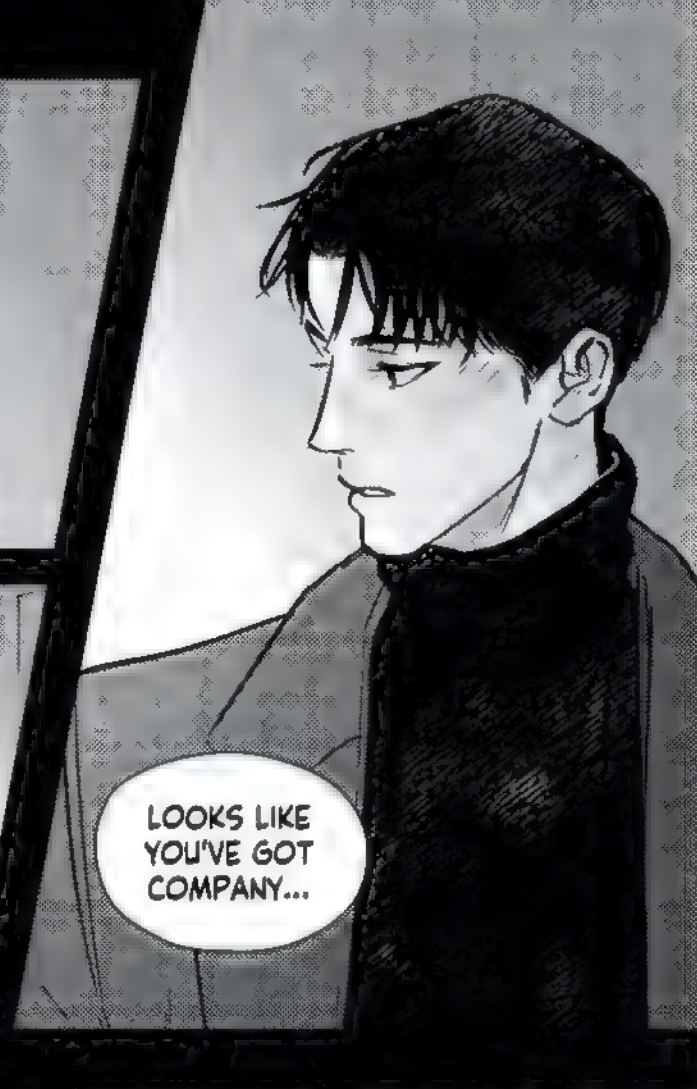
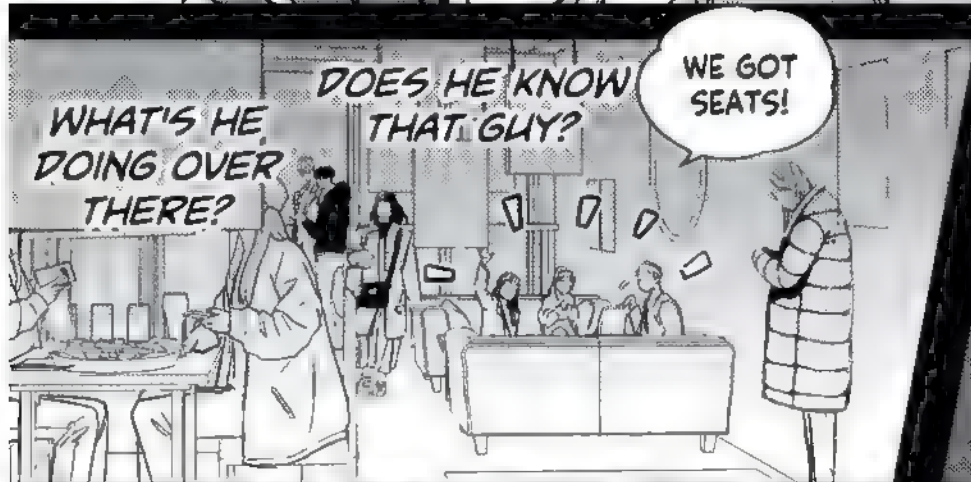
YOU KNOW ME,
DON'T YOU?? 'CUZ I THINK
I MIGHT KNOW YOU...

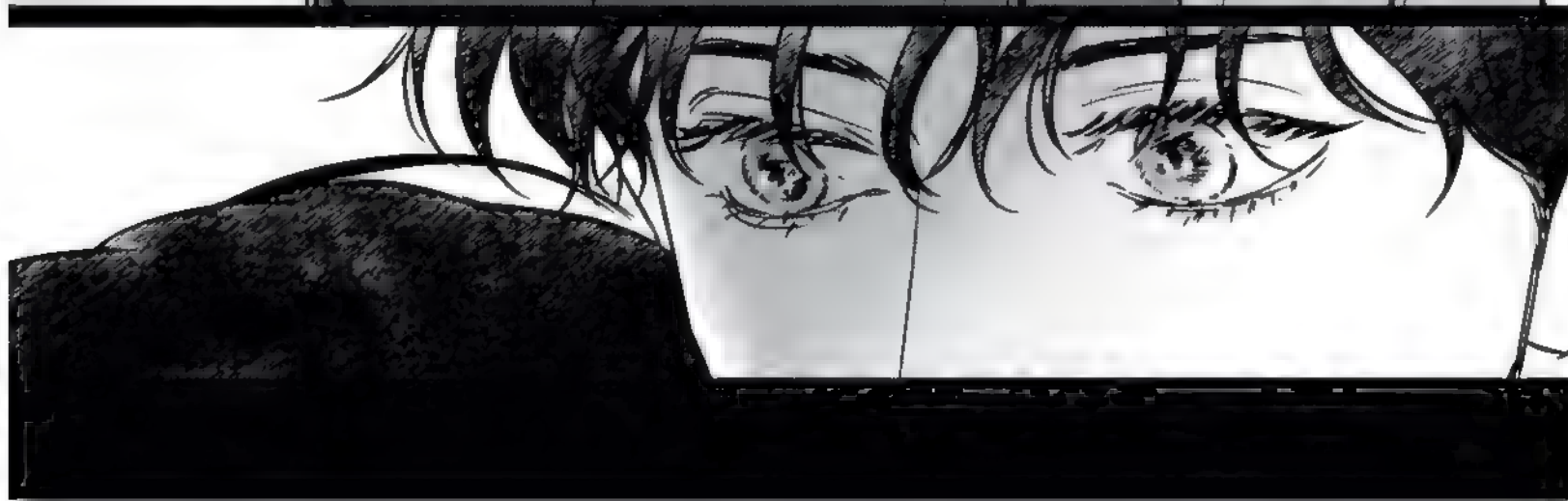


SO WEIRD...



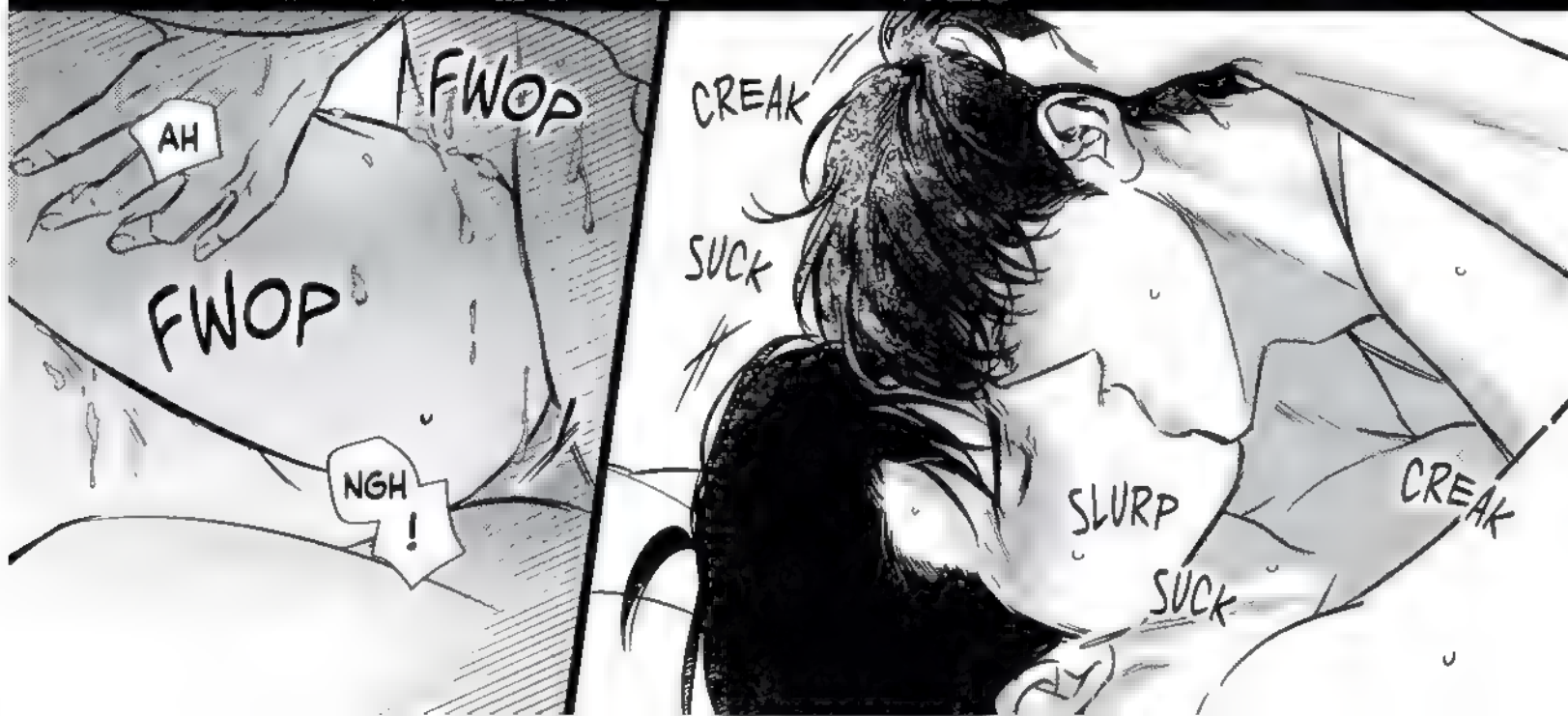
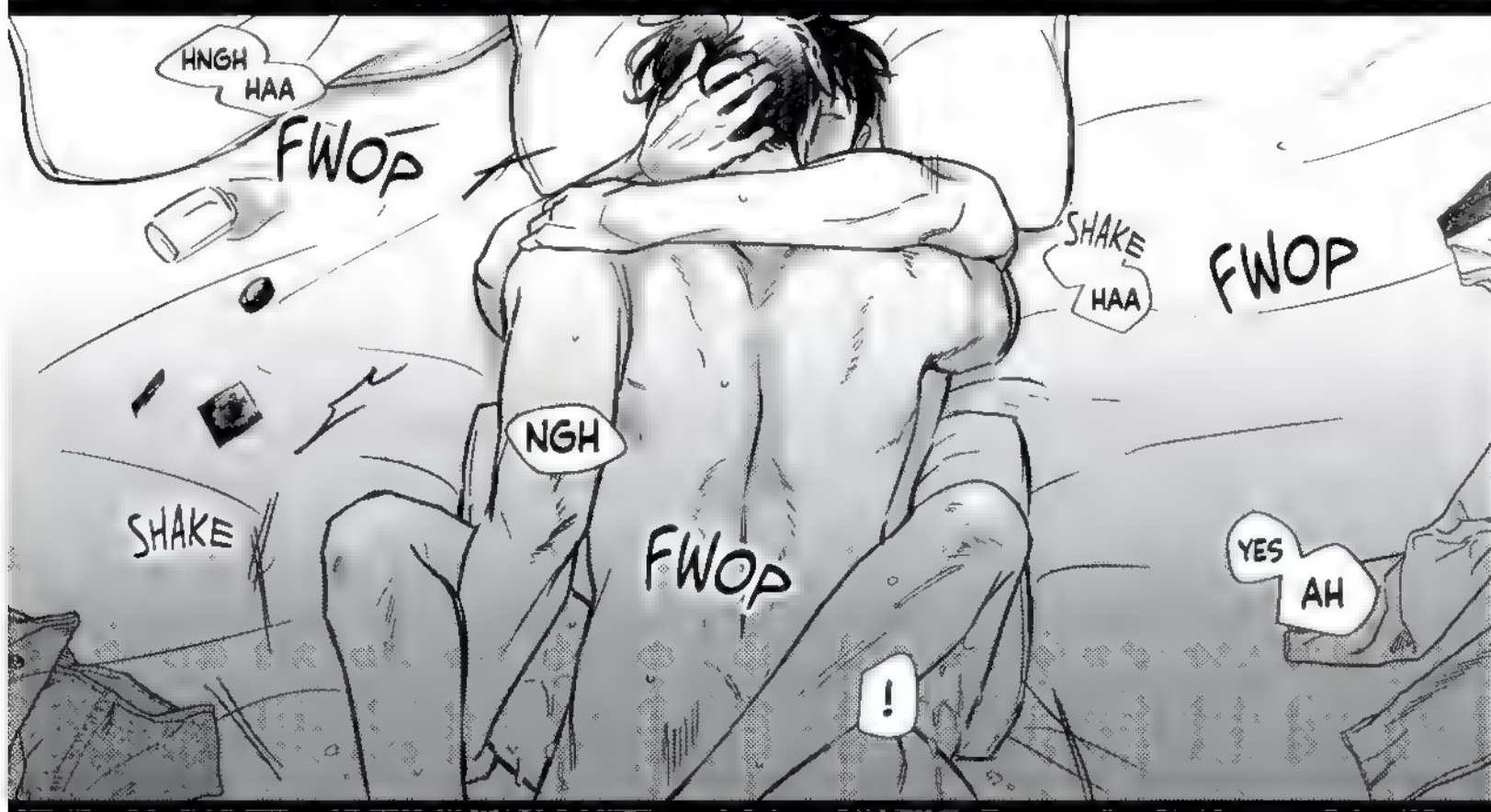
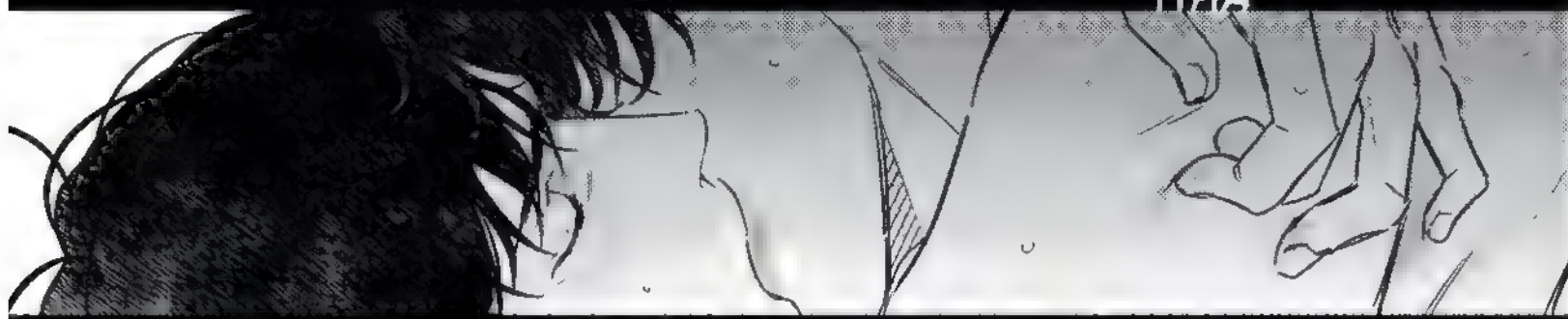
WHY AM
I SO GLAD TO
SEE YOU...?

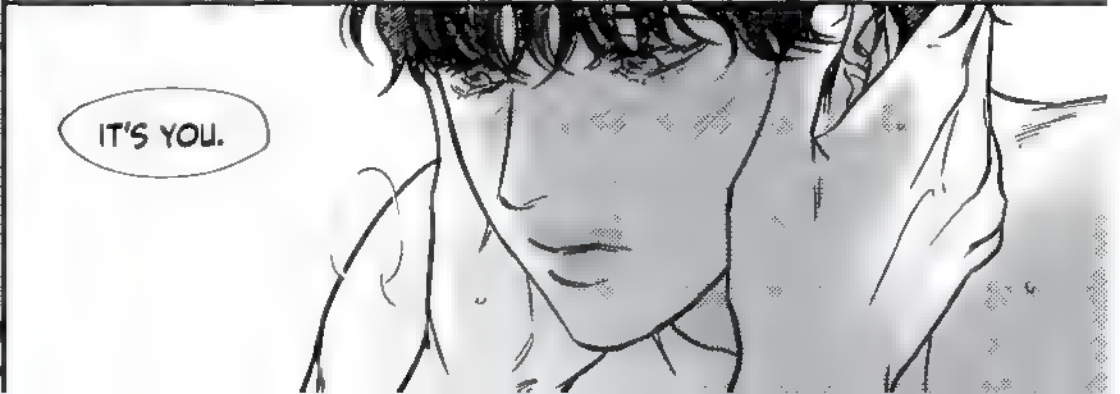
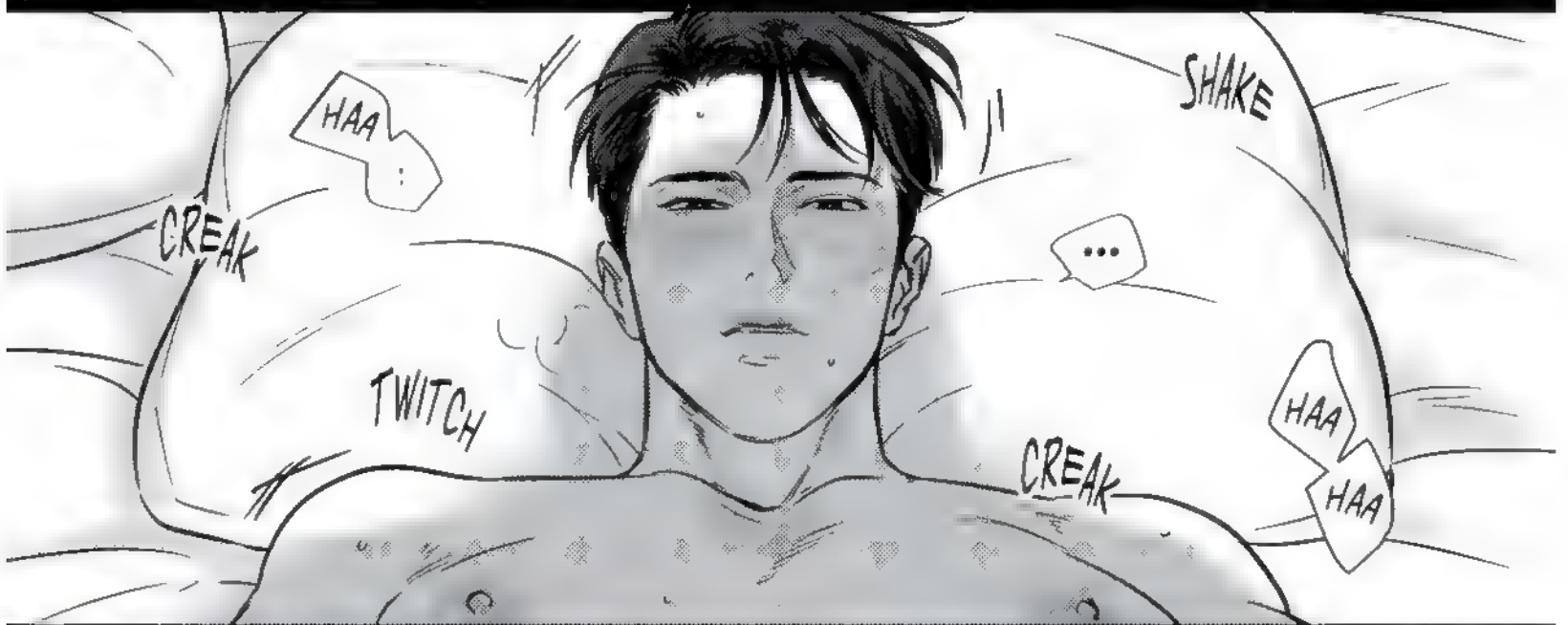




HAA

HAA

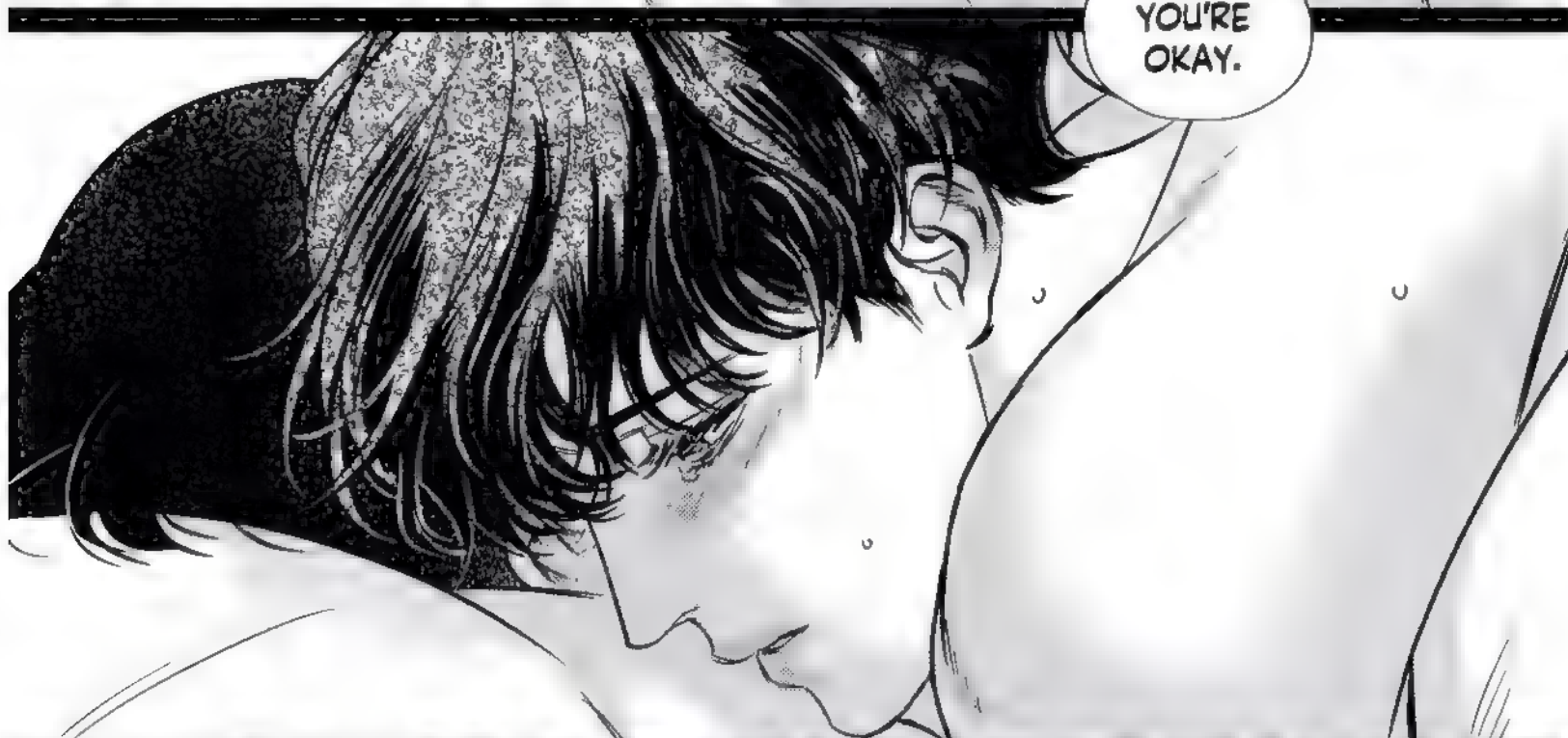








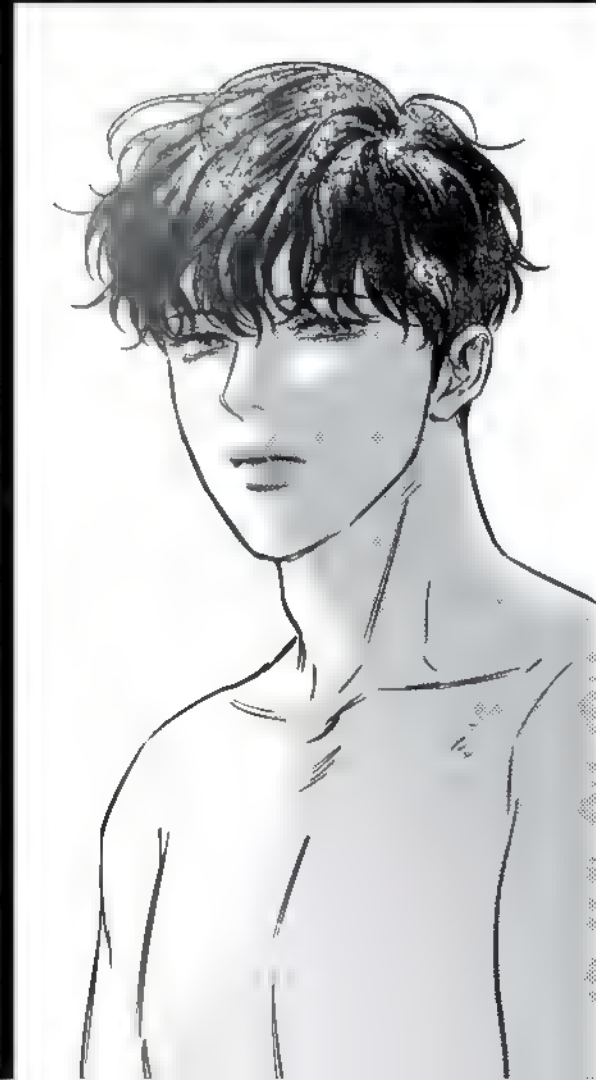
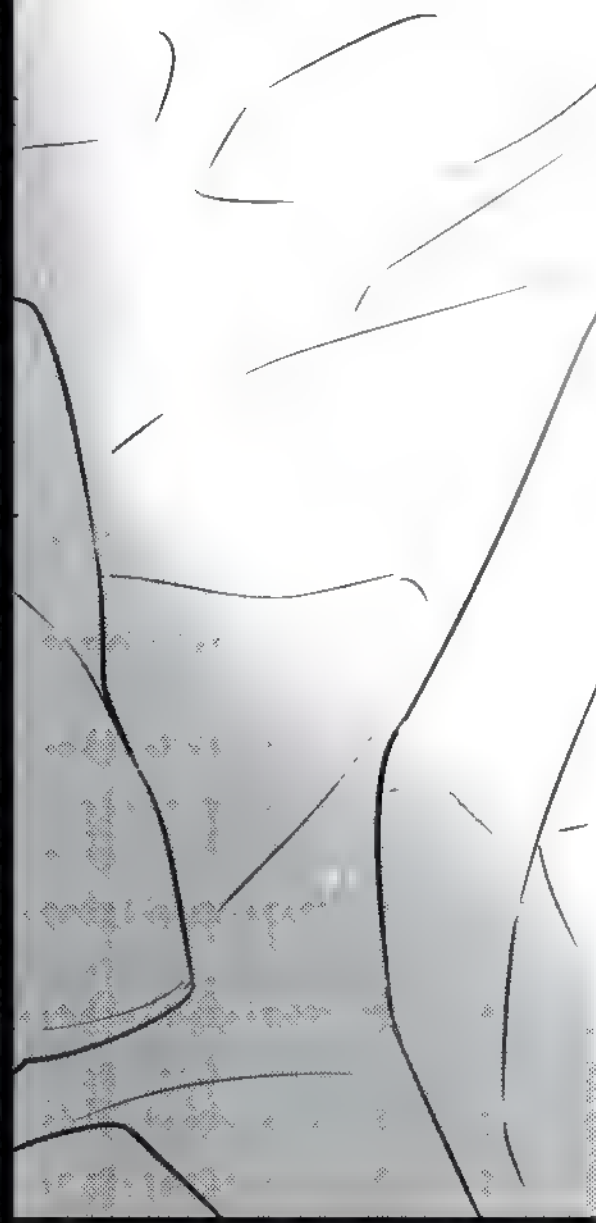
YOU'RE
GONNA BE
OKAY.



YOU'RE
OKAY.

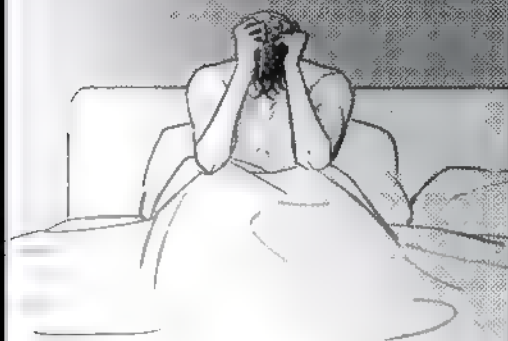


IT'S OKAY.



I FINALLY
MANAGED TO
MEET HIM...

SIGH



CLENCH



SO-STUPID!

BUT I HAD TO
BLOW IT AWAY WITH
A MEANINGLESS
ONE-NIGHT STAND...



ARE YOU
DOING OKAY
NOW?



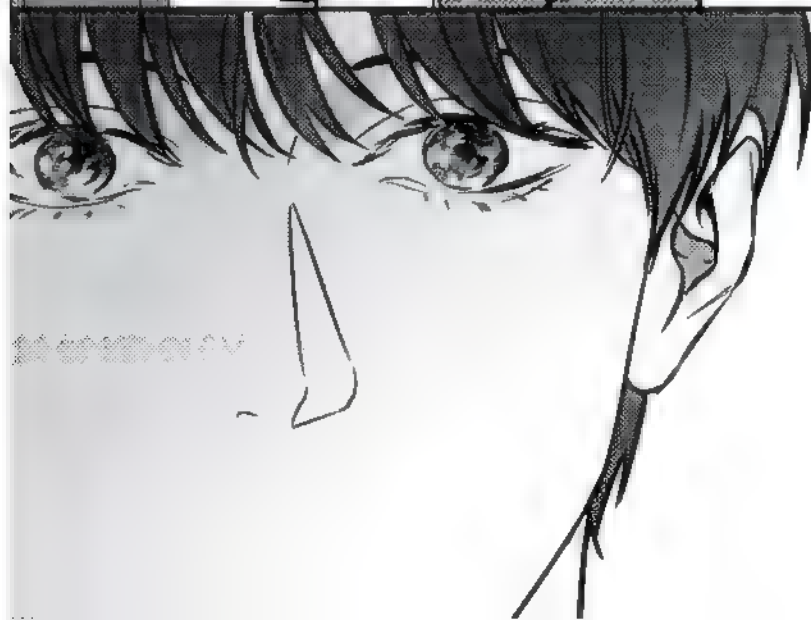
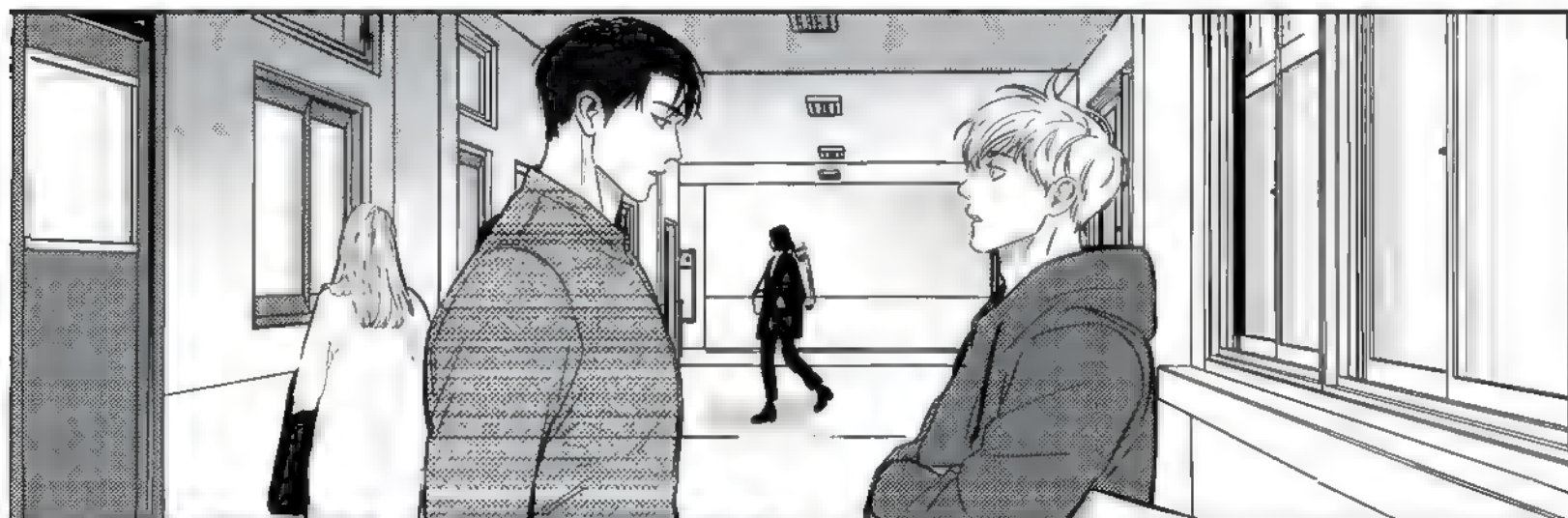
THERE WAS SO MUCH
I WANTED TO TELL HIM
WHEN I MEET HIM...



WHAT A WASTE...

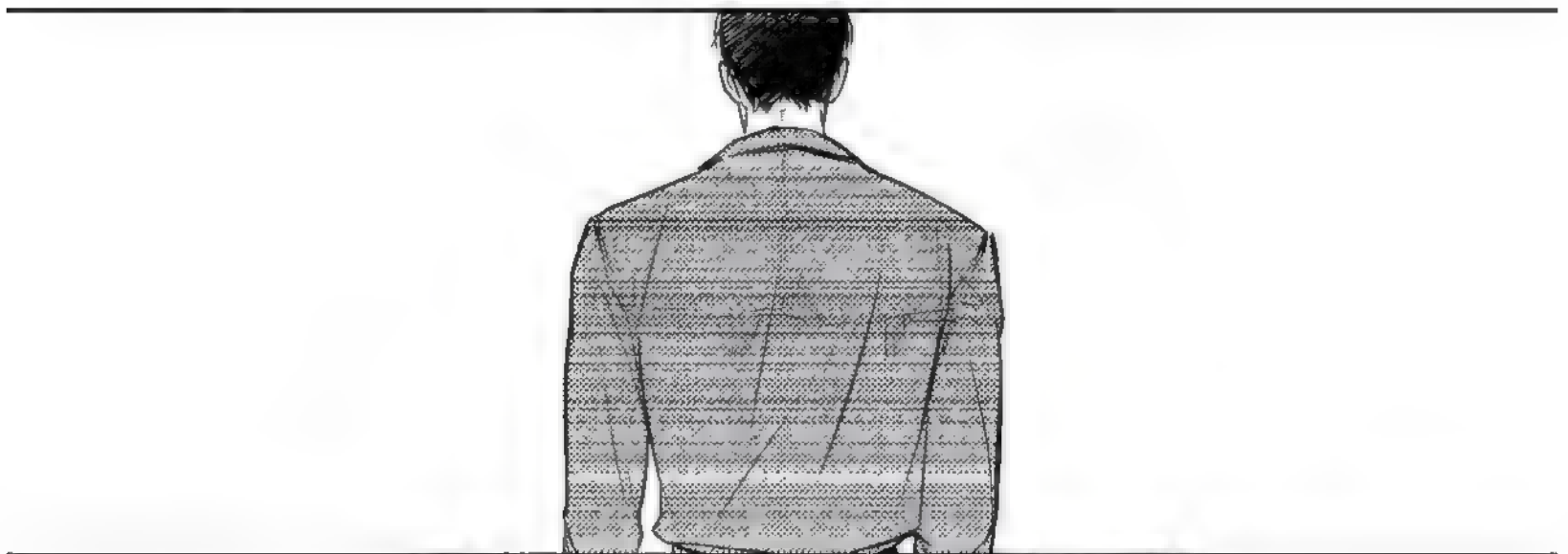


WHEN I SAW HOW MUCH
HE HAD BEEN SUFFERING
ALREADY, I COULDN'T THINK
OF ANYTHING...



...EXCEPT HOW MUCH
I WANTED TO HOLD HIM.





...THAT MY HATRED FOR HIM
KEPT ME ALIVE.



BOOM

BOOM

BOOM

IF I COULD SEE HIM
JUST ONE LAST TIME...





THIS TIME,
I'LL BE THE ONE TO
APPROACH HIM.

YOU ALONE?

The End



